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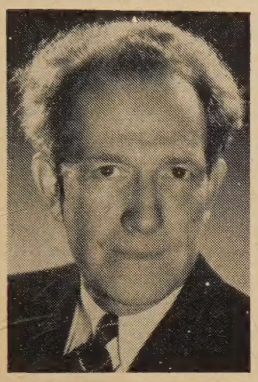
# The Pulpit

*A Journal of Contemporary Preaching*



Harold Cooke Phillips:

## THE LIVING WORD

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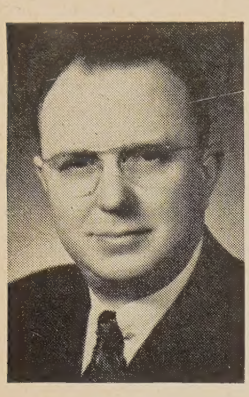
VOL. XXIV, NO. 12 DECEMBER 1953



*By Ansley Cunningham Moore*

# WHAT SHALL WE

CELEBRATIONS marking publication of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible made a terrific impact on the three thousand communities in which they were held last year. I could feel a heightening of emotions in the pew when I told the exciting story of the discovery by Tischendorff in 1844 and 1857 of the manuscripts now called *Codex Sinaiticus,* of the uncovering in 1900 in the sands of the Nile of the mummified crocodiles stuffed with ancient manuscripts, and of the unprecedented discovery in 1947 of more ancient Hebrew manuscripts than scholars ever dared dream were in existence. Many listeners, borne on a wave of enthusiasm, rushed out of church after the service and ordered a copy of the new translation, often buying the $10 leather-bound edition with the owner's name stamped in gold leaf on the cover.

Every thoughtful minister in America has wondered if these newly bought Bibles will be read and studied and followed, or whether they will be looked upon as museum pieces, heirlooms, fine editions to be kept under lock and key.

### The Ministry at Fault

The answer lies partly with the ministry. If we continue to stress that the Bible is a good piece of English literature which, incidentally, has fine rules of conduct scattered through it, then this new interest will come to naught. On the other hand, if we ministers are convinced that here one finds the Word of the living God without which the world has no hope, then we will stir ourselves and capitalize on this current wave of enthusiasm. As a matter of fact, although our people have heard the Bible quoted all their lives in newspapers and sermons, observed its use in the swearing in of public officials, and seen copies of it on countless library tables, for most of them the Bible is still a closed book.

This preacher has the feeling that part of this is our fault. If we are honest we will admit that *we* read everything but the Bible. *We* have a feeling that it is dull and lengthy, and *we* have lost the thrill of reading it. I, for one, am doing something about this matter. I am reading the Bible, not in a frantic search for texts and material for homiletic purposes, but for sheer enjoyment, which, rather than self-improvement, John Macy says is the real purpose of great literature. Reading the Bible in this fashion has made it come alive for me, and I find that its phrases, its incidents, its teachings, funnel naturally into my preaching as never before. The make-up of the RSV helps my attitude toward reading the Bible, which in its new form looks like a book to be read, not an obstacle to be hurtled.

### What about Inspiration?

We ministers frighten people away from reading the Bible. We make it seem complicated and learned by quoting too many commentaries and referring to books which give varied views of its teachings. Many of us read the Bible so poorly in public that it wearies the people, and we approach its explanation as a task to be endured, not a privilege to be enjoyed.

Still another factor which discourages the more intellectual in reading the Bible is the widely held, but distorted idea of the church's teaching concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures. From bits gathered here and there, these people understand (or misunderstand) inspiration to mean that the Bible was dictated by God to writers who were passive and helpless in his hands, and that therefore the church teaches verbal inerrancy of the Bible. Rightly understood, the church's teaching about inspiration challenges men to read the Bible rather than turn from it.

Many of our church people want untechnical answers to these questions about the Bible: Is it inspired? If so, what is meant by inspiration? Does inspiration mean verbal inerrancy? Are all the Bible's statements regarding history and science to be taken at their face value? If not, does this undermine our faith? We ministers might as well face these honest questions of our people and try to give honest answers. One must clear new ground before the planting begins.

The substance of the older idea of inspiration is that the divine origin of Scripture guaranteed it against error, and God himself is responsible for each statement in the Bible. This view "conceived the human authors of the Bible as passive instru-

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# DO WITH THE RSV?

ments in the hands of God, acting wholly under his control, and producing a book for whose every statement its divine author was responsible." Holding this conception, our forefathers were forced to harmonize passages which seemed at variance.

### Today's View of Inspiration

The present-day interpretation, instead of taking anything from the Bible, gives it added glory and meaning. It honors both reverence for the Bible and scholarship, says unequivocably that the Bible is inspired, that it not only *contains* the Word of God, but *is* the Word of God. One scholar who holds this view of inspiration summarizes it thus: "It is plain that a uniform level of inspiration is not maintained in all its parts. All passages do not give us insight into the will and nature of God. Christ is the Word of God that gives perfect insight into his nature and will, for in him alone is the absolute revelation of the heart of God."

The revelation of God that we have in Christ must be the standard by which we judge whether or not God is revealed in any passage. Anything not in harmony with the revelation of God as found in Christ did not come from God, but rather represents the misunderstanding of God by sincere men. Inspiration, then, does not mean the *suspension* of human personality but the *use* of it. While man's personality colored the revelation through which it was mediated, God's eternal Word to man in each age shines through, and one of our supreme tasks in every age is to find that Word for ourselves in the Bible. One of the glories of this view is that it thinks of the Bible not as having been finished by a static inspiration, but rather as a means through which God speaks to us today.

### Reading Varies

We now face the question of what to tell our people about how to read and study the Bible. What we say must be simple, clear, and meaty enough to challenge, but not so complex as to frighten. Naturally there are different kinds of reading, as Professor Adler has so well said. Here we are not trying to get our people to read for relaxation—a type of reading which does not stretch the mind or push back horizons. We are after *real* reading with the whole being, seeking that understanding which brings the reader into "gear" with the author and allows the author to color his mind. The invariable result of this kind of reading is fatigue. What we are after is "an active inquiry concerning the real significance" of a passage. Memorizing Scripture is not real Bible study, as many persons have an encyclopedic knowledge of the facts of the Bible and yet know little about its truths. Searching for proof-texts to slay a theological enemy is not real study.

### One Method Outlined

One of the great students of Scripture has said with insight, "The way to study the Bible is to study the Bible." There is no such thing as a perfect method of Bible study for all men, but in searching for a method for intelligent laymen I have found these steps to be important and helpful:

(1) Select a short book (in the Old Testament one of the Minor Prophets; in the New, one of the Epistles or Mark) and read it through without stopping, to get a general impression. Make a mental note of any words, phrases, persons or events which may be clues to the author's pattern or plan for the book.

(2) Re-read the book selected several times (one Bible student says he never begins *studying* a book in the Bible until he has read it through at least fifty times!) until one can answer these questions which Professor Adler says one should be able to answer after reading any book: What was the author trying to do? What questions was he trying to answer? What are his most important concepts? What reasons has he given for his conclusions?

(3) Attempt now to make a simple outline of the book, including all the principal material.

(4) Read some recognized help to increase one's knowledge and correct first impressions. Aids should never be used until the text of the Scripture under consideration is familiar. Commentaries should never be used as a substitute for reading the text of Scripture.

(5) On the basis of the knowledge gained, try to determine the main teaching of the book for the original readers. It obviously was written for a purpose by a person of intelligence who wrote to a particulation situation and expected people to understand it. The student must swing into this stream of thought before he tries to interpret the message for his own time.

(6) Now the student may be ready to lift out the abiding spiritual message of the book or passage under consideration. The study is not complete until God's eternal Word for our time has been sought and determined.

Fortunately, the student of the Bible at this point can test whether or not he has done his work well. If he has received a spiritual lift from struggling to understand, if he has stretched his mind to comprehend, if his spirit is elated, if he has a sense of moral achievement and a feeling of having been touched by the Holy Spirit, if some passages have fairly leaped from the page at him as he read, if he stopped and rolled those words under his tongue with the indescribable feeling that this is God's Word for me and my generation *now*, and if his Christian convictions have become more seasoned—then God has spoken to him through his holy Word.

### Difficulties to Be Faced

There are difficulties involved if we are to "mark, learn and inwardly digest" the Bible. It was written in the East, in languages unlike our own, in other ages, by authors whose background and interests were quite different from those of the modern Western world. Its truth is often beyond our immediate comprehension, and its precepts at times are not in harmony with what we understand to be the moral teachings of Christianity. Part of the difficulty, too, lies in ourselves, in the fact that we are unwilling to surrender to the truth.

The plain fact, however, is that if anyone—*anyone*—approaches the Bible with an open mind, an understanding heart and a willing spirit, he will draw immediate dividends. Campbell Morgan once said the study of the Bible requires honesty, reverence, diligence, system and response. We ministers, in leading our people to the Bible, should make much of the fact that the organ of spiritual perception is obedience. If we obey as we learn, we will surely and certainly gain by leaps and bounds a knowledge of God's revelation. This writer has the feeling that light for our time is about to break from God's Word upon those who will tarry to read, to study, to think, to learn. For these the Bible will become "hands that grip you, eyes that pierce you, a tongue that thrills you, and feet that carry you."

***For Universal Bible Sunday—December 13***

# The Living Word

**By Harold Cooke Phillips**

*And he closed the book, . . . and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.* Luke 4:20.

IT often happens that some simple act suggests more than meets the eye. It is such an act that we consider today. On a certain Sabbath when Jesus was at Nazareth he entered the synagogue, as was his custom, and read a passage from the book of the prophet Isaiah. Having done so, "He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant, and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.' " *"He closed the book."*

The book he closed differed from our Bible in two respects. For one thing it did not look like a book. Writing in those days was done on scrolls. In closing the book then he probably rolled up the scroll. Not only, however, did his Bible look different from ours; it *was* different. The New Testament had not been compiled. His Bible was only a partial Bible, the Old Testament. This was the book he closed.

Is it not strange that Luke should have recorded the incident? After all, on every Sabbath the Scriptures were read and the book closed. Since this act of Jesus was recorded, it must have been that Luke attached some peculiar significance to it. Whatever its significance for him, let us see what meaning it might have for us.

### The Open Bible

For one thing, obviously, anyone who closes a book has first opened it. This Man who closed the book was in the habit of reading it. He knew what was in it. The Bible was not regarded by Jesus as a sacred relic. He did more than pick it up occasionally to wipe the dust from its covers. He read it. He closed it because he had first opened it. Its devotional literature sustained his soul. Its prophetic insights inspired his spirit.

Do we ever close the book, or do we keep it perpetually closed? Do we see only its black, mournful covers or, like Jesus, open it to find the light and life that comes from within? I imagine Jesus closed it every day, for he opened it every day. Isaiah speaks of the vision becoming "like the words of a book that is sealed." For too many of us the Bible is a sealed book. For such it matters

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not whether the Bible was ever translated into English, let alone revised.

Again, might not this act of Jesus symbolize the end of the old dispensation and the beginning of the new? The book he closed was the Old Testament. He was the embodiment of the New. Was he saying by this gesture that men would now be led into a fuller understanding of spiritual truth? "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." This gesture then may symbolize the transition from an old order which was closing, to the new one about to begin.

### A New Day in Religion

Now when Jesus closed this book—the law and the prophets—a new day had dawned in man's religious life. "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, . . . But I say to you. . . ." What he said always expanded, enlarged or enriched what had been said. The book he closed had inadequate ideas of neighborliness—he corrected these with his story of the Good Samaritan; inadequate ideas of God—he clarified them with his story of the lost sheep or the lost son.

Through Jesus' life and teaching the insights of the Old Testament blossomed forth into full flower. Yet he sought to effect this transformation not through destruction but fulfillment, not through revolution but evolution. His contemporaries, however, would not move into the freer and ampler day to which he beckoned. They resisted and opposed his fuller light. The result was the crucifixion and, some years later, the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, as he had predicted. One cannot help but ponder how different the history of Israel might have been had the contemporaries of Jesus accepted the idea of spiritual evolution which he espoused rather than the method of physical revolution exemplified by the Zealots.

These two methods are still before us.

> The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfills himself in many ways.

But how are these changes to be made? They may be brought about peaceably and in orderly fashion not by destroying the values of the past but by fulfilling them. So often, however, in refusing to make changes voluntarily we are compelled to make them violently. Most of the revolutions that have sought to destroy the treasured values of the past—indeed the revolution in our world today—have resulted from our unwillingness to move, to evolve voluntarily and peaceably from an old order to a newer one. We can close a book or an epoch without destroying it, and so carry the treasured values of the past with us. Life is not static but dynamic. George Buttrick is right when he says that in God we live and move, and if we do not move we do not live—we die!

Once more. "He closed the book, . . . and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him." This symbolizes the familiar yet oft-forgotten truth that at the center of our religion is a *Life*, not a *Book*. Here was another step in the evolution of religion which the contemporaries of Jesus were loath to take.

Recently the *New York Times* carried a large advertisement urging people to buy Israeli bonds. Here was a large picture of the Jewish Bible and on its covers the words, "Behind Israel is a Book." That I believe illustrates better than all else the basic difference between the great faith of Judaism, out of which Christianity emerged, and what we think of as the greater faith of Christianity. Christians would say, "Behind Christianity is a Book," but would add, "Before it is a Life." "He closed the book, . . . and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on *him*."

Is this not why Christmas means so much to us? It reminds us that at the center of our religion is a Life. We made much recently of the new Revised Standard Version of the Bible, and rightly so. Yet, important and richly significant as this new edition of the Book is, it does not stir us as does the thought of Jesus' birth. This is simply another way of saying that Christ is greater than the book. The Word made flesh is greater than the word. This is what Martin Luther meant when in his strong way he said, "Jesus Christ is the King of the Book."

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***How do two distinguished preachers handle the same text? This question is answered by the sermons in this issue from Harold Cooke Phillips and E. Crossley Hunter. Both were delivered during a preaching mission in Boston.***

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### The Living Word

The church has often forgotten this. We have acted as though our religion were the religion of a book rather than a Life. We often fight over the book, each insisting that his interpretation is the right or only one. In so doing we frequently deny or betray the spirit of him who is greater than the book. In defending the letter of the law, the written word, we destroy the spirit of the Life, the Living Word. We then face the paradox of being unchristian in our defense of Christianity. Our means defeat our ends.

Did you read a few months ago that someone had burned a copy of the Revised Standard Version? What this man hoped to accomplish is uncertain. This, however, is clear, that had he been living in the Middle Ages he would have burned not only the book but also the men who made the new translation. How often in our theological or ecclesiastical squabbles have we, under the pretense of defending Christianity, betrayed the spirit of Christ in the pettiness and bitterness of our attacks upon each other.

The Pulpit for December 1953. Volume XXIV, Number 12. Published monthly by the Christian Century Foundation, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5, Ill. Telephone HArrison 7-5380. Price this issue: 30 cents; $3 a year in U. S. A., $3.10 in Canada. Foreign $3.35. Copyrighted 1953 by Christian Century Foundation. Entered as second-class matter May 14, 1942 in Post Office at Chicago, Ill., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

"He closed the book," as if to say: "The real test of your Christian faith is not in the letter of the law but in possessing my spirit. Never mind how correct your views, how orthodox your opinions, even if you understand all the mysteries within the covers of the book, that is not the test of discipleship. Your religion is not the written word but the Living Word." "Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him." In the first epistle of John we read, "We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love our brethren. He who does not love remains in death." One is reminded of Voltaire's comment on the Jesuits and the Jansenists. He referred to them as "contending for a century which party loved God most suitably, and which could most effectively harass and torment the other."

### Scripture Fulfilled

We have mentioned three insights suggested by this act of Jesus in the synagogue. There is, however, another and quite pertinent truth. "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing," Jesus said, referring to the passage from Isaiah which reads:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has annointed me
to bring good tidings to the afflicted;
he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.

It is as though he had said to them, "You can read those words now in the book: you can *see* them fulfilled in me. This great truth is no longer only in the book; it has been translated into life." "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

Is there any portion of this book that has been fulfilled in us? Is there any part of it we can close, not because we would neglect its truth, but rather because its truth has become a part of our lives? We read in the Bible about the Kingdom of God. Every Sunday we pray, "Thy kingdom come." Is there more of that kingdom in the world today than there was, let us say, ten or even fifty years ago? Is there more justice, righteousness, love in the world of business, politics, industry, now than yesteryear?

When men want to know what Christianity teaches about the brotherhood of man, where must they look? Must they read the New Testament to find out, or could they possibly learn of Christian brotherhood by observing how Christians live, seeing their attitude towards other races, classes or nations? Have any of these great truths in the book about the brotherhood of man been "fulfilled" in us?

### Living Spark

Where is the Sermon on the Mount? Is it still in Matthew's Gospel, or is some of it in us? The trouble with the Sermon on the Mount is that it has been too long on the mount. Can we bring that Sermon down to earth and try to live by its principles?

The words of this book are like well cured logs laid in a fireplace. The room is cold and damp. But the logs lying there will not help until you set fire to them. Even so, the truths of our religion, potentially capable though they are of changing the atmosphere by releasing light, warmth and redemptive power, will not become effective until set on fire by the living spark of human personality.

We should never forget that Jesus did not say to his disciples that their words were the light of the world, but rather that they themselves were this light. Is this what Paul meant when he said, "You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on your hearts, to be known and read by all men; . . . not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts"?

Is this, do you suppose, where we have fallen down so badly? Our religion has been too exclusively in a book and not enough in us. A religion kept in a book is not vital or living. What would friendship be in a book? Friendship means little apart from friends in whom the principles of mutual respect, trust and affection become alive. Even so our friendship with God in Christ.

### Symbol of Discipleship

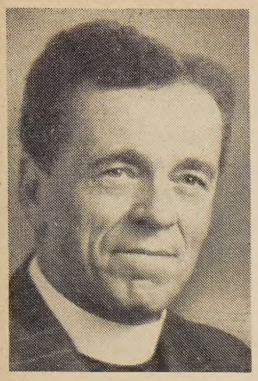
"He closed the book." But in so doing he did not shut up the truth he had read within its covers. That truth was fulfilled in his life. Perhaps this was one reason why Luke recorded this familiar act in the temple. No one else ever said what Jesus said when he closed the book. No one ever said, "Now this truth I have read to you is going to be for me something more than words printed on a scroll. This truth which you have heard me read, you shall see me live. I am going to make this great message of Isaiah a part of my life, give it hands and feet and heart."

And so the Word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought.

Great is the book, greater the Life. Great is the written word, greater the Living Word. That it should come alive in us, be fulfilled in us as it was in our Lord, is a sign of our discipleship.

## The Tragedy of Christmas

Christmas comes again in the twentieth century to many of us as it must come to a wayfarer on a bitter winter night who is standing outside of a warm lighted house. He sees the lights but knows that he will not be able to stay inside the house. We see only a glimpse of the light and warmth and then the night and the cold close in again, and the world returns to hate and fear, violence and death. Christmas is a forgotten hope lying in the ashes of our broken and forgetful years.—*Otto P. Kretzmann, President, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana, in an address before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.*



# 'He Closed the Book'

**By E. Crossley Hunter**

*He closed the book, . . . and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him.* Luke 4:20.

LET this be said, before he closed the book, he had opened it. He had read it and memorized it; he knew it better and loved it more than anyone else in the synagogue that day. All through his ministry he was to quote from it until his final cry: "Into thy hand I commit my spirit." So, whatever our text means, it does not mean that he belittled the book or considered it of small importance.

It was a mark of respect that the officiating rabbi called upon the Nazarene to come forward and read their scriptures, for only those highly regarded were trusted with that sacred office. To this day the reading of the Torah, or Law, is the supreme exercise in the worship of the synagogue. No one held their scriptures in deeper reverence than the Hebrew people. To expound the scriptures was the supreme responsibility of their rabbis. They cherished the law and the prophets.

So it was with reverent and expectant hearts that the people looked to Jesus that day when he unrolled the scroll of their prophets and read: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me. . . ." It was the glorious prophecy that foretold what God would give them—beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Imagine their amazement when, having read this thrilling prophecy, Jesus closed the book and calmly said: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

### Limitation of Words

"He closed the book, . . . and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him." What if it means this—the book had gone as far in making God known as a book could? It had told much about the eternal, the creator, the law-giver. The prophets had proclaimed that he was righteous and just; the Psalmist had said he was kind and merciful. "As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our trangressions from us." "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him." All these wonderful words were written in their sacred pages.

But words have limitations. If you do not think so, ask a young man who has tried to express his love to his beloved. Indeed, the most faltering, hesitating and poor speeches I have ever heard have been those of happy grooms attempting to reply to the toast to the bride. Moreover, if the groom was too fluent of speech on such an occasion, we might well suspect that he was thinking more of the speech than of his bride. In any of the great moments of life—in times of joy or grief —words are inadequate to express our feelings.

### Revelation of Life

All great words can only be defined in terms of life. Do not go to the dictionary to find the meaning of the word "mother," for the dictionary will tell you, "A mother is a female parent." You have to see and know a mother—one like mine or yours —really to understand all the word "mother" can mean. The dictionary would tell you a missionary "is one who is sent." The root meaning of the word is "to send." No dictionay definition, in words, could ever tell us what a missionary is like. If you could have seen David Livingstone the hour that he received his degree from Glasgow University, standing with limp arm which had been mangled by a lion, his body wasted and his face wan from malaria (twenty times he had been stricken and had fought his way back to life); if you could have known the hardships endured, the dangers faced, and the undefeatable passion in his heart to heal Africa, the open sore of the world—then you would have known what a missionary is.

That great words can only be known when expressed in life is preëminently true of our Savior. He closed the book because henceforth the truth must be known, not in a book, but in life—not in the printed word, but in loving deed. I asked a truly great poet recently if he had ever written a poem that had perfectly satisfied him, and he said, "No." Beauty of thought can never be perfectly expressed in word, nor can the loveliness of an artist's vision be completely portrayed with brush and paint. That is what Browning meant when he wrote: "Ah, a man's reach must exceed his grasp—or what's a Heaven for?"

The story is told of a boy who was born after his father had gone to war. The father did not return, and as the boy grew, he repeatedly asked his mother, "What was my father like?" The mother tried to satisfy the lad's curiosity by saying that his father had been a very brave, a very

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kind, and a very good man. But the boy was never quite satisfied. Then his uncle visited him, and he asked his mother, "Was my father anything like my uncle?" "Yes," the mother said, this uncle was his father's older brother, and all who knew them had said they were very much alike. Then the boy with glad heart cried out: "O Mother, I know now what my father was like." Words can convey much, but only life can fully reveal.

Our text tells us, "The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him." When the book had led them to look at him, it had fulfilled its purpose, and no reading of the Scriptures is complete until it leads to him. I once heard a rabbi confess that their scriptures were incomplete. They pointed forward to a Messiah and a Kingdom that were yet to come. When we reach the last page of the Jewish scripture, the hope is still unfulfilled, and hearts are left waiting and longing.

He closed the book, for he was the fulfilling of the law. All the longing of the prophets came to fruition in him. The psalmist cried, "The Lord is my shepherd." Jesus alone could say, "I am the good shepherd." David declared, "My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God." Only Jesus could say, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." Job could cry, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Jesus alone could say, "I am the resurrection and the life." He is more than the book. The book was the promise; he was the fulfillment. "These are they," said he, speaking of the Scriptures, "that testify of me." No longer was the truth imprisoned in the printed word. Now it was to walk in flesh and blood and in the loveliness of a sinless life.

So we rejoice in the living Word, in the revelation that has been made known in a perfect life. As the apostle said, we are "saved by his life." Thoughts of men are communicated by word and picture, but they come with greater passion and power when they are clothed in life. Beauty and truth will always seek to find their larger expression in character patterned after the perfect example of Christ. The incarnation is not only a fact of history, it is a principle of life. The word must always become flesh. So you and I, in some small measure, can commend our Lord to a wayward world.

*An Advent Sermon on the Theme of the World Council Meeting at Evanston*

# Hope That Previews History

**By Merrill R. Abbey**

Revelation 18:21—19:8.

ON a quiet street in Stuttgart, a bombed church presented the inscription over its chancel arch, "Christ Is Victorious." When the congregation restored their sanctuary, they renewed that affirmation. After bitter years amid nazi tyranny, the horrors of war, the sadness of defeat and occupation, how could they go on asserting Christ's victory? The better I came to know them, the more apparent it became that this hope lay not in the world and its forces but in Christ and their expectation of his deeds.

Against that background one can better understand what has seemed to many of us a strange and mysterious document—the report of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches on the problems to be faced by the Council Assembly in 1954. To American ears it has a sound of unreality, with its emphasis not on Christian action but on the expectancy of Christ's action and his coming into the world.

### Human Failure

After visiting Stuttgart, I read again such passages as this: "It is especially of his lordship over the future that the Assembly is called to speak. There is a special need today to remind the church and the world that the Christ who has come and who is with us, is also he who is to come." Suppose I lived in Stuttgart, amid a long procession of human failures, betrayed by national leaders, shocked by the horror of antisemitism at its frightful worst, battered and desolated by war, confused by the contradictions of the occupation —would I then build my hopes on the things such failing men could do? Would I say, "What we need is more effort," when the strenuous efforts of men had been the undoing of all I held dear?

We who live far from central Europe do share the common life of the world neighborhood. We

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cannot escape the memories of Belsen and Buchenwald, Hamburg, and Hiroshima. We inhabit a world of "atomic jitters." We meet our intimately personal defeats. Our consciences are burdened by sins that make us sick at heart. We have seen things dearest to us come crashing down about us, and have wondered if it was not God's judgment upon us. In the midst of so much human failure, we come to know that the hope of the future cannot be in our unaided humanity, which seems more capable of its own destruction than of its own salvation.

### Faith—Foundation of Hope

Yet if we have Christian faith, we are not without hope. We know we cannot resign our efforts, yet our merely human strenuousness drives on to its own frustration. Into the midst of it comes a mighty Christ whom no cross can turn back, who builds his "citadel of hope on the edge of despair." He has done much for us and for the world, but he will yet do far more. "The Christ who has come and who is with us, is also he who is to come."

In the bombed-out center of once-proud Nuremberg, beside the mass grave of sixty thousand war victims in Hamburg, along the iron curtain frontier, I kept pondering the words of the World Council committee. In that setting it was not so strange to hear men say, "There are those who rest their final hope upon some human plan for the world, and who are led thereby—sometimes against their own conscious purpose—to treat human beings as mere things. To them we must say that the final judgment upon all human history will be the judgment of the Crucified, who will demand an account of what treatment has been given to the least of his brethren, and who will bring to nothing the pride of presumptuous men.

"There are others who, misunderstanding the Christian hope, neglect their duty in this world. To them we must say that they will be held accountable in the day of judgment for every failure to seek and to do God's will in this world. But beyond these there are those who have no hope of any future. To them we have the joy of bringing the good news that Jesus Christ is Lord of all, that the future is in his hands, and that he is able to keep all that we commit to him against the day of his coming."

### Preview of History

There is a sense in which Christian faith and hope thus preview history. Thoughtful Christian men do not pretend to know the day or the hour, nor to understand the way in which their Lord will come. Yet they look forward to his victory. They live in expectation of his appearing in their lives. With this prevision, they can say, even in the midst of the ruin of their worldly hopes, "Christ is victorious!"

Shift the scene to the heart of a tiny Christian community at the turn of the second century. Mighty Rome is attempting to stamp out the new faith by torture and persecution. If you were one of this organized minority, what would hold you to such a costly a faith and keep your hope alive?

The answer, of course, is plain to read in the Revelation of Saint John. Written to the church under persecution, its wierd, mysterious figures of speech are a code language through which the Christians could see, though it would lie beyond the comprehension of the pagan world. Running as a constant theme through all the lurid pictures is one great affirmation, lifted at last into a mighty shout—"Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns."

That faith involved a preview of history. Written while Rome stood at the glittering zenith of its power, the book told, as if it were an already accomplished fact, the story of her fall and desolation. "The sound of harpers and minstrels, of flute players and trumpeters, shall be heard in thee no more; and a craftsman of any craft shall be found in thee no more; and the sound of the millstone shall be heard in thee no more; and the light of a lamp shall shine in thee no more; and the voice of bridegroom and bride shall be heard in thee no more." Stand in the ruins of the Forum or the Coliseum today, and these words strike home in dreadful literalness. But imagine the daring faith of one who could write that preview while those pavements resounded with the pomp of the rulers of the world! Or stand beside the ruin of Hitler's proud chancellery in Berlin and read them as God's recurring judgment on power that defies his forces of truth and righteousness. Rome was not the last capital to fall under that judgment. Do you suppose Berlin will have been?

### Not Passive Fatalists

In this preview of history the persecuted church found the assurance of its hope. As Rome was already defeated, even in the day of its seeming power, those who stood within the will of God were already victorious. The future belonged to the things they stood for. Their conscience knew a peace their persecutors could only vainly envy.

While their final hope was in God and his action, they were not left to a role of passive waiting. Their own deeds were significant. They sang, "The marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure"—for Paul added, "the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints." Their *deeds* were a glory to God and the key to their own entrance into a share in his victory. His triumph did not depend upon them, yet their faithfulness was deeply significant in his plans. An indomitable hope could build on such faith.

Your hope is never secure until it can meet life at its worst. That is why Christian hope holds the key to such a time as this. In a quiet hour in the Black Forest, the late Bishop Ernst Sommers of Germany said to me, "When tyranny and war had brought us to the worst, it was only and always the deeply convinced Christians who had hope. They lived in expectation of the coming of their Lord." In a thrice-bombed hospital in Nuremberg, I heard the echo of his words as I read the inscription spread across the wall of the nurses' dining

room: "We do not know what is coming, but we know who is coming—Christ." As I visited the refugee village the church had built not far from the Baltic coast, I heard his voice echo again; for here was hope that went to work, creating a new life and a new hope for those who had lost all. Those who lived in expectation of the coming of their Lord were not passive fatalists. Knowing that "the Lord our God the Almighty reigns," they were clothing him with "the fine linen (that) is the righteous deeds of the saints."

In the power of this preview of Christ's victory, tyranny meets its most courageous resistance. When bombs damaged the building which housed the Methodist Theological Seminary in Frankfurt, Bishop Sommers went about the restoration in what may seem like a strange sequence for a practical man. Though many of the facilities more essential to the operation of the school were destroyed, the bishop insisted that other things could wait until the chancel wall in the chapel had been rebuilt, complete with its inscription, "One is your Master, even Christ." In a land ruled by a dictator who claimed mastery even of the souls of men, the first priority must be placed on the assertion that only Christ is Lord!

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***This is the first of a series of sermons dealing with the Evanston theme of the World Council of Churches, "Christ, the Hope of the World." Future sermon plans are discussed in "For the Record" on page 31.***

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In Berlin, Bishop Otto Dibelius still speaks for freedom in the face of Communist tyranny. Administering a diocese that takes him far into the Eastern Zone, and preaching often inside the iron curtain, the bishop persistently speaks out against the infringement of human rights and the denials of the faith. Under his leadership, churchmen find courage, even under Communist occupation, to insist on the rights of a free conscience and free worship, as when they appended to a declaration of their faith the note: "This truth is not compatible with the materialistic view of life. We protest, therefore . . . no governing power has the right to force upon anyone a philosophy that runs counter to his faith and his conscience."

An American sociologist visiting in Germany reported evidences of the Russian confidence that they hold the future "because the tides of the universe run their way." The Marxist philosophy of history, he said, gives them a millenial hope that irresistible forces are on their side. We need such a hope to meet the crisis of our time, and in the Christian "preview of history" we have it. In this spirit, the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches declared: "To a church which suffers and may even be destroyed in the eyes of the world, the only hope is the Christ who is to come in judgment and in mercy, in whose presence it already stands. Its submission is not to its persecutors, but to the Lord who alone can give the assurance that it is not only for its sins and worldly entanglements but for witness to its Lord that the church suffers. . . . The witness in suffering can be seen by the world, and it may be more effective in transforming it than the church of which the world speaks well."

### Heroic Service

At its worst, this faith reasons that, because Christ will come when the world has reached its most dreadful crisis, attempts at human betterment are wrong, since they defer his advent. Christian faith at its best, far from sharing such fatalism, gives itself to heroic service precisely because of the confidence that when we have done our best his mighty forces complete what we can only begin. Refusing to pretend to a knowledge we cannot have concerning what lies beyond us, it nevertheless believes that we shall one day know him better than we know him now. A Christ already present in the world will come in fuller victory than we have seen.

He comes in the transformation of character; and it is not our goodness or our resolutions that bring him, but his coming that brings righteousness out of our evil. He comes in neighborly helpfulness and understanding. He comes in the reconciliation of our differences when we have been most painfully at odds. He comes in the achievement of genuine community of interest and concern in our individualistic world. It is not our neighborliness or reconciliation or community of interest that brings him near so much as it is the wonder of his coming that makes possible this deeper unity of life. Some of us, yearning for truer fellowship, could find it best by a more complete surrender of ourselves to him.

### Challenge to the Church

He comes with a challenge to his church. Too often the Christian fellowship loses the distinctiveness of its witness by making itself a pale copy of the world around it. "In its worldliness the church forgets that Christ was crucified by the world," and needs to be called back to tension with the world. It is not our business as a church to be a mere echo of the culture in which we stand; and the coming of the living Christ recalls the church to a life that is a judgment on the world rather than an extension of it. How we need such a visitation!

There are other times when the church loses its concern for a lost world. "In its preoccupation with its own concern the church forgets that Christ was crucified *for* the world." It is not our business as a church to live apart from the world in holy aloofness. We are set in the world to bear a witness by both words and works to the love of God which transforms and redeems, and the coming of the living Christ recalls us to a life which is itself a quest of the lost and an opening of the door to fellowship and love. Not our strenuousness, but our surrendered loving faith, can open the door to such a visitation.

# The Word Made Flesh

**By Johnstone G. Patrick**

*The word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory.* John 1:4.

A SERMON on Christmas, what could be easier? The subject is shot through and through with color; the theme is throbbing with romance. It conjures up for us a crowded gallery of cheerful pictures, all lined from childhood memories—carols and snow and Christmas stockings and trees abloom with toys; brightly printed cards on the mantelpiece or piano, holly and mistletoe; plum puddings alight, family games and fun. The season possesses overtones and undertones of meaning that would require an uncountable number of sermons to exhaust.

There is a subtle something abroad in the air at Christmastide that warms hearts, opens purses, and makes tired mouths to smile; something that sets streams of surreptitious sympathy overflowing, that fills and floods the mind with "thoughts so sudden, that they seem the revelations of a dream"; something that exercises a delightful spell over the imagination and unloads on our doorsteps a freight of friendship fraught "with the fragrance of home-dwelling joys"; something that clings with cherishing fondness about all small children, that helps to hush the world's sighing and swell its singing, and enkindles new purpose and inspiration; something that lights lovely little colored candles, to quote the farrier in George Eliot's *Silas Marner,* "i' the dark and i' the lone places" of this life. Indeed, the very word Christmas itself is magical.

### No Christmas without Christ

But to get behind the tinsel and the formalities and to preach about the reality is not so easy. It is never easy to preach about Christ, and Christmas without Christ is shorn of all its sublime significance. Any Christmas celebration in which the Christ Child is conspicuously absent is like a frame without a picture; like a life lacking in love; like a feast without food. Christmas without the Christ Child is a brief boom of hectic gaiety and forced friendliness, followed all too frequently and fleet footedly by a slump.

It is true that Christmas is not the liturgical season for lamentations: it is the time to say "Merry Christmas" and mean it honestly, kindly and expansively. But once we forget the Good News, "the glorious tidings of great joy," the Christmas season begins to pall on us.

The Good News is that God came down into this world on the first Christmas morning. In his cosmic-sweeping mercy the infinite, everlasting God —not just a moral reformer, a religious poet, a gentleman of absolute integrity—broke into human history. He stooped beneath the lowest roof in Bethlehem and clothed himself in the garment of our own frail flesh. It is not so astounding that God came down to earth: had he not visited "this vale of tears" spiritually many times before? Of course he had! He once filled a desert shrub with his glory and it flamed with fire. On another occasion he entered a great mountain and it quivered and quaked with his presence. But the amazing fact is that "in the fulness of time" he shrank to the size of a small son of man and limited himself to the loveliest of all earth's languages—a newborn baby's cry! "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."

### Visit the Manger

Let us loose the reins of our imagination a little and look at the straw-strewn manger over there: at the young country-girl in her teens, that elderly man approaching the shady side of fifty, and at that Baby only a few hours old! Suppose we had actually gone, in company with some horny-handed herdsmen and some star-led sages from the East, into that cobweb-covered cattle-cave, all those long years ago; would we have seen any difference between that Baby and the baby we have—or used to have—at home? I think not. He would have felt the cold of that winter's night and have cried, too.

It is marvelous in our mind's eye to see him, "who keeps Israel," sleeping *in* a manger. But can any man count, measure, imagine, all that has come *out* of a manger? A vast society of millions, churches, chapels, monasteries, abbeys, ministers, missionaries, cathedrals, schools, colleges, paintings, songs, hymns, oratorios, plays, orphanages, hospitals, political liberties and institutions, millions of books, poems, thoughts and deeds, "faith, hope and charity"—all these, and more besides, emerged from a manger! The marvel of *the* Manger is just that!

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Let us transport ourselves in thought to the straggling, sleepy street of old-world Nazareth, onto which opens the door of the village carpenter's shop. See, he is sitting there, behind his father, with a hammer and some nails and a bit of waste wood. Do you think he never hit his finger? Of course he did, and howled when he did it. "In all things like to us," is the manner in which an ancient writer put it, "excepting sin." His growth was a man's, his outward development was a man's, and his heart was a man's. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth."

Allow some twenty or so years of our Lord's earthly life to slip away, and let us look again. On a low hill outside an old city wall, a little crowd is swaying. You can almost hear the hard breathing of someone in pain, and mocking laughter, and the dull thud of a hammer. Suddenly the crowd swirls back, and over its shifting edge a forbidding black outline gradually rises against the eastern sky. A cross sways, hesitates and finally settles into its socket. There is a muffled cheer, and then silence through which sounds a voice, so tired, so patient, so loving. "Father, forgive. . . ." That is all: the most universal words in human language, the most instinctive feelings in the human heart. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us."

Behind the majesty and glory of God made man, within his very divinity there beats a human heart, a heart with all the emotions and sympathies of a man. All that we suffer, he has endured in his own flesh, and far more than that. All the trials, even the temptations, of mind and heart and body he has undergone like us. He, if anyone in the whole universe, understands and knows. He knows every fiber of our being; he follows every vagrant thought; he thrills to every throbbing of our hearts. Surely in him—and in him alone—we shall find the succor and sympathy we seek. That is the threefold lesson of the crib, the carpenter's bench, and the cross—the astounding truth that we are, at Christmastime, so apt to forget!

The life of him whose birth Christians commemorate each Christmastime was all of one piece, like the seamless garment he wore. At the end of that life stands a cross. Bethlehem and Calvary must never be separated in meaning or in time. It took the simplest of all cribs, the loveliest human life ever lived, and the crudest of all crosses to defeat death, shatter sin's soul-destroying power, dispel the darkness of doubt and leave behind an empty tomb in Joseph's garden. Not only by his humble birth in the stable, but by his bloody sweat, by his death and resurrection, by his eternal presence, is he the Savior of the world.

## Christmas

The songs of Christmas were made to be sung in the dark; but with a bright light shining from beyond the world outside of time, greater and stronger than everything else in the world. Life's highest joy is to go to the manger and to know that in the Child of Bethlehem is everything you have ever asked of life, of the world, of time, and of God.—*Otto P. Kretzmann, President, Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana, in an address before the Chicago Sunday Evening Club.*

# Ten Commandments for the Bible Student

**By Ansley Cunningham Moore**

I. Thou shalt not force a saying to mean something that the author did not intend, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh a text out of its context and maketh of it a pretext.

II. Thou shalt not interpret Scripture with Scripture beyond a reasonable point, for the books of the Bible are not the homogeneous work of a single author, and therefore one cannot argue unreservedly from one author to another.

III. Thou shalt not embrace without due thought and care the prophetic school of interpretation, for there are snares here where the beginner may be led to such follies as Millennium dating, and other untoward practices.

IV. Thou shalt not interpret Messianic prophecy without careful exegesis, for herein lies many a pitfall for the inexperienced.

V. Thou shalt not multiply types unduly. In thy enthusiasm for the God-appointed symbols of the Bible—the paschal lamb as a type of Christ and David's kingdom typifying the Kingdom of Christ—thou shalt remember that the type is only "a shadow of things to come."

VI. Thou shalt not spiritualize, thus giving eternal significance to temporal matters.

VII. Thou shalt not press details of Biblical parables and miracles too far, remembering that there are particulars in most parables and miracles which do not have a spiritual counterpart.

VIII. Thou shalt not ignore the author's times, the meaning of his words for him and his readers, his religious ideas, his background, or the *Zeitgeist* (the spirit of the times), for these important matters reveal his writing's significance and force.

IX. Thou shalt not study spasmodically, in fits and starts, but regularly and prayerfully, taking cognizance of the fact that the Lord thy God reveals the deep meaning of Scripture only to those who obey its truths.

X. Thou shalt not allow any doctrine—whether the Second Coming of Christ, Dispensationalism, Premillennialism or the Social Gospel—to determine what thou shalt find in the Scripture, but shalt rather test all doctrines by the living Word, and thus keep a sane perspective on the grand sweep of its truth.

# Wise Men from the West

**By John Calvin Reid**

*Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem.* Matthew 2:1.

SIMEON STYLITES, writing in the *Christian Century,* had a striking little essay which began as follows:

SIR: I heard the words being read, "In the days of Herod the king, behold, Wise Men from the East came to Jerusalem. . . ." Then my mind, never very strong at sticking to the point, trailed off. Suppose, I thought, suppose that the Wise Men had come from the West rather than from the East. Suppose, too, that they shared and expressed some of the main, dominant ideas and drives of our Western civilization and world. What would have happened if it had been Wise Men from the West journeying eastward toward a star? What gifts would they have carried to Bethlehem?

The Wise Men from the East treated the infant Jesus as a man, you will recall, not as a baby. They brought, not toys, but gold, frankincense and myrrh. What are the gifts which our generation places high on the list, when men think of giving to men?

I fingered a Pittsburgh newspaper for an answer and came upon an eye-catching but not unusual advertisement for the Christmas season. On the left was the picture of a handsome, well dressed man, but his face wore a look of perplexity. To the right was a second picture of the same face, now wearing a happy, though obviously forced, smile of relief.

### Gifts of 'Distinction'

Under the troubled face I read: "Man, I'm really stuck. Every year it's the same old problem of gifts for the fellows and the trouble is, they have such distinctive tastes. Uh-oh, that's it—Distinction."

Then under the other picture—the smiling one: "The whisky of distinction! They'll sure like such a fine whisky. . . . Great idea! And I can do all my shopping in just one store."

Then I fingered through an issue of *Life.* How many separate beer, ale, wine, whisky and gin advertisements do you suppose it contained? Twenty-nine! Of these, twelve were full-page ads, two were double-page spreads.

One shows a pleased husband, relaxing in a chair beside the Christmas tree as he holds in one hand a bottle, in the other a Christmas card "To Bob from Mary." The heading reads: *"To the Top of Your List, from the Bottom of Your Heart."* Then in smaller type: "For Dad . . . Uncle Jim . . . Friend Mike . . . For the very top men on your list there is no warmer or friendlier greeting than a holiday gift of———whisky. Give it, serve it . . . and enjoy a truly happy holiday."

And we "Wise Men from the West" are falling for it, to the tune of $10 billion a year. That is $75 per year for every man, woman and child in our country—two and one-half times as much as we spend for public school education. To manufacture our yearly supply requires over three million tons of grain—sufficient to keep alive for one year 33 million starving people in Europe or Asia.

### Are We Wise?

And what are we getting in return for our indulgence? As a nation we now have 50 million drinking people, many of them women; yes, many of them young people in their teens! Three million are chronic drinkers, and one million, or about one out of every 150 Americans, are alcoholics! A rather shocking percentage, is it not? And do you have any idea of what this adds up to on the red ink side of our national ledger in disease, highway accidents, inefficiency in work, higher insurance rates, domestic strife, crime, juvenile delinquency, personal and family misery, and so on ad infinitum?

Now I am not being emotional. I think I am as calm as Abraham Lincoln was when he said, "Liquor has many defenders but no defense." I'm being as rational as I know how to be when I ask you the quite sensible question, how far is this destroyer of the property, bodies, minds and souls of men and women to be allowed to go before the light of public opinion flashes red instead of green?

Would a doctor's opinion weigh more with you than a minister's? A prominent Chicago physician told a group of college educators:

I am a Christian, and I have certain moral convictions on this subject of which I am not ashamed. But these I waive. I speak to you as a physician and from a business man's standpoint. Suppose you were in the cattle business, the owner of a large herd of fine-blooded cows, and suppose some disease were to appear among them that would do the same degree of harm to your cows that alcoholism is doing to our citizens. Suppose further that this disease were to spread until all the herds in our country were

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infected with it—what would cattle men be saying and doing, and meat packers, and the general public, and the government? Imagine further, that as a result of research it should be discovered that this cattle disease was caused by one ingredient in the food being fed to the cows. How long do you think it would take the cattle men to decide to eliminate completely that one ingredient?

What is our answer to that doctor's argument? Thomas Edison said, "To put alcohol in the human system is like putting sand in the bearings of an engine." The next time you have fresh oil put into your car, suppose the attendant were to say, "There's a little sand in this oil, not much though, only five grains to a quart!" Would you let him put it in? Would you pay good money for that kind of lubrication?

I repeat, what is our answer to these arguments? Could it be that to us—"Wise Men from the West"—cows are more important than human beings, and the inside workings of our automobiles of more concern than our intestines, blood vessels and brain cells?

Where did it come from anyway—this idea of celebrating Christmas with drinking and wild revelry? Is this a New Testament idea? Is this something that originated in the early church as did the Lord's Supper and baptism and the ordaining of officers by the laying on of hands?

### History of Christmas

For two centuries after the birth of Jesus the church lived under the shadow of persecution and observed no Christmas celebration. But the Romans had their great yearly festival, the Saturnalia, held in late December and marked by unbridled pagan license and dissipation.

It was largely to counteract and displace these riotous degrading customs that in the 4th century the bishop of Rome officially set December 25 as the date on which to observe Christ's birthday. The season, as the Christians saw it, was still to be one of joy and gladness, but not given to sinful pleasure.

In time, simple presentations of the Nativity scene were staged in churches. Later, more elaborate religious plays were produced. In the 13th century, St. Francis of Assisi, in the mountain cave where he lived, placed a life-sized image of the Christ Child in a manger. A wealthy lord provided a living ox and ass for the scene, and peasants scattered straw on the floor. At night the cave was alight with flickering tapers as throngs from the surrounding villages pressed into the rocky chapel to witness the quiet monk at his service. St. Francis made this observance of the birthday of Jesus almost as impressive as the commemoration of the Lord's Supper.

The singing of carols was also an important feature of the Nativity celebration in the Middle Ages. At first such singing took place around a manger scene inside a church, but in time it became a popular feature of home celebrations also. A baby or doll in a cradle would be put in the middle of the room and someone acting the part of the mother would rock the child while family and friends joined in joyous singing. The French name *Noel* means simply "birthday," but in England the festival came to be called *Christes Masse* or "Christmas," because a special mass in his honor was celebrated on that day.

Coming down to the present day, it becomes clear that the struggle of the church with the paganism of Rome is far from over! Christ has not won out over Saturn. The Saturnalia has not been replaced by "Christ's Mass." In fact, it would seem that the tide is "flowing"—flowing is the right word, is it not?—in the opposite direction. It would seem that Saturn is winning. And if not Saturn, Bacchus!

### Modern Paganism

Yes, I know there are exceptions, and let us thank God for them—homes in which Christmas is as joyous as the laughter of little children and as pure as their shining eyes. But looking at the American scene as a whole, wouldn't you agree that these lines are not an exaggeration?

How can they honor Him—the humble lad
Whose feet struck paths of beauty through the earth—
With all the drunken revelry, the mad
Barter of goods that marks His day of birth? . . .
I think if Jesus should return and see
This hollow blasphemy, this day of horror,
The heart that languished in Gethsemane
Would know again as great and deep a sorrow,
And He who charmed the troubled waves to sleep
With deathless words—would kneel again and weep.[1]

And there is something you can do about it. Many of you are in places of influence in society and business—you can help change the type of some of the so-called "Christmas" parties. Many of your employees and friends would be relieved and grateful, as you well know. Or your courage may need to take the form of courteously but firmly refusing certain invitations. What a challenge to all of us, by influence, word and example, to begin to turn back this tide—away from Saturn and Bacchus, back toward Christ!

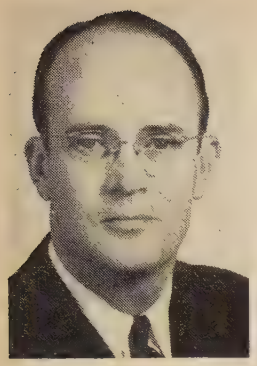
Within the last year I attended two lovely wedding receptions—both in country clubs with all the "class" one could wish. In neither case was anything alcoholic served, yet I heard no grumbling, saw no one disgruntled. Best of all, in each case the host and hostess were courteously demonstrating that alcohol is not necessary for a lovely party or a good time. Such people in my opinion are fulfilling in a significant fashion for our age that word of Jesus, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

In this sanctuary is a stained glass window depicting moral courage. It might be profitable for every one of us to stand in front of that window long enough for our souls to become fired by its message.

There stands Daniel who in Babylon purposed

*(Continued on page 25)*

[1]"Wise Men of the West," by Anderson M. Scruggs, from *Masterpieces of Religious Verse*, Harper and Brothers. By permission.



# Serving a Grown-up Christ

**By James R. Webb, Jr.**

*Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and in favor with God and Man.* Luke 2:52.

WE must now go *beyond* Christmas. Each of us has paid his homage to the Babe of Bethlehem. We have brought our love and adoration to the Christ Child. This is all very beautiful, but something more is required of the true Christian.

For the Babe of Bethlehem grew up, as every normal child does. He did not remain in a cradle. For him to be a baby in a cradle was the beginning of his mission in the world, but it was *only the beginning*. The *fulfillment* of his mission in the world was yet to come. He was not born to remain a child, but to become God's Man. Standing before Pilate near the end of his earthly life, he said, "For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness unto the truth." After we have rejoiced in all that Christmas means to the world, it seems fitting to remind ourselves in these days after Christmas that our salvation was wrought out not by a baby cradled in his mother's arms at Bethlehem, but by a man stretched upon a cross at Calvary.

Great numbers of modern people never go beyond Christmas in their faith in Christ. Like the rest of us, they bring their adoration to the Babe in the manger, but their faith carries them no further. Their Christianity begins at a cradle but never reaches a cross.

### Manhood of Jesus

We grant that a baby can do some things for us that a man cannot do. As we gaze into the eyes of a newborn child and see reflected in them perfect innocence and purity, we are reminded how sordid and stained our own lives are. As we look upon a tiny baby, we marvel again at God's miracle of life, whereby a mother gives birth to a child. What mysteries and what knowledge a baby can stir in us! But it is still true that a man can do for us many things that a baby could never do.

See what the Man Jesus can do for us that the Baby Jesus could never do: he can forgive our sins and grant us power for new life; he can reveal eternal principles for the foundations of our lives; he can found a church which can become his Body; he can die on a cross, to reveal the suffering love of God. If we are mature Christians, we must be willing to let Jesus do for us as a man what he could not do as a baby.

Some people never allow that to happen in their lives! They are symbolized by the woman who takes her Christmas decorations down when the season is over, packs them in a box marked "Christmas," and stores them away in the attic for another year. Such people come to church to worship on the Sunday before Christmas, but once that is over, they pack Jesus away in some remote corner of their minds until such time as they may need him again. So with us, when holly wreaths are taken down and Christmas tree lights are disconnected, what *then* for the Babe of Bethlehem?

### From Bethlehem to Calvary

Actually, it was what happened to Jesus himself *after* Christmas that made the day meaningful. It was not merely the birth of a baby that changed the course of the world's history—it was what that baby *became*. Bethlehem is inseparably linked in meaning to Galilee and Jerusalem and Gethsemane and Calvary, and to an empty tomb in a garden.

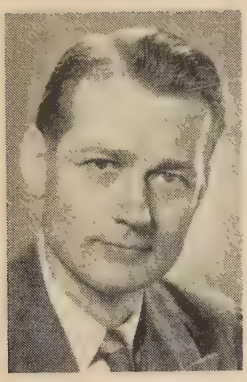
When Britain's Prince Charles was born five years ago, the whole world was interested because this little boy may some day be a king. So, our songs of rejoicing around the manger find their high meaning in the fact that the Christ Child was to become King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He, too, was of royal birth, but his scepter was to be a cross. The person who makes room for Christ only at Christmas time actually has only half a faith.

Jesus himself was constantly demanding that his followers develop a mature faith. There were those in his own time who seemed to have only a childish conception of what was meant by following him. To the young man who cried out, "I will follow you wherever you go," Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head." Jesus wanted him to realize clearly that a disciple must be ready to live the life of a real *man*, with its hardships and ruggedness.

Of course, it is easy to want Jesus to remain a baby. Following him as he begins to grow up costs something. As a child, he demanded little of

*(Continued on page 25)*

*JAMES R. WEBB, Jr., is pastor of the Methodist Church in McRae, Ga. A graduate of Emory University and Yale Divinity School, he has served two other Georgia pastorates.*



*A Stirring Affirmation of Christian Faith*

# Sound the Amen!

**By Harold R. Albert**

*Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,*
*from everlasting to everlasting!*
*And let all the people say, "Amen!"*

Psalm 106:48.

ONE Thursday evening while the choir was rehearsing in the chancel I happened to be walking through the church. I heard the choirmaster stop abruptly and say, "Now, once again, sound the Amen!"

One wouldn't ordinarily take notice of such a commonplace remark, but shortly thereafter I happened to be reading the 106th Psalm. There it was again in the last verse. "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! And let all the people say, 'Amen!' "

Exactly so. No word is so taken for granted, so thoughtlessly used, so often sung or said without regard or reverence as is the *Amen.* But no other word in the liturgical language is so fraught with significance for the church, so essential to the life of the church. None, in fact, so *makes* the church as does the *Amen.*

Think of it. Can there be one word that is the total church's total response to the action of God? Then sound the Amen! But more, and of first importance: Can there be one word that speaks out the action of God? It is the *Amen.* So Paul tells the Corinthians, "For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why we utter the Amen through him to the glory of God." Here in Biblical speech is the very action, the promise, the assurance of God finding its Amen, its yes in Christ.

### Christ Is God's Amen

John in his Revelation goes further. To him Christ *is* the Amen as he writes, "The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness." This is the glorious thought then, that Christ is God's Amen to the world!

I recall attending a minister's meeting one afternoon when a Jewish rabbi arose to speak. He wanted to tell the group of his thrilling experience as guest minister in one of the local churches. "You know," he said, "I discovered that the prayers you pray and the prayers we pray are quite alike. The only possible difference is that you put on the end of your prayers, 'In Jesus' Name.' "

Later on I realized with a certain sadness that there are those like Helmut Kuhn's description of the Existentialists, "who having taken the road to Calvary, and arriving there, find the place empty except for two thieves dying on their crosses."

All the promises of God: his presence, his forgiveness, his power, the hope of glory—all without exception—are Amen, finding their *yes* in the cross between those two crosses! "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." How could we live, how could we hope without the Amen of God who speaks to us and says, "Come unto me . . . no one comes to the Father, but by me." So it is. Yea, yea, it is so. "He who has the Son has life; he who has not the Son has not life."

### Response of the Church

Now with the action of God fixed—Amen—in Christ, the Amen is then the response of the church. So it was that in some of the earliest liturgies there was obviously that understanding in the church that the action of God is not action, the Word of God is not word, he is not present effectually, unless and until there is the Amen of the church. I owe to H. Grady Davis of Chicago, the information that in some of those very early liturgies, as the celebrant speaks the *Verba,* "Take and eat, this is my body, which is given for you," the church responds and acts immediately, in this very moment, with the Amen. In like manner, as is said, "Drink ye all of it, this cup in the New Testament in my Blood shed for you and for many for the remission of sins," the church incorporates that action, realizes itself as the church, the Body of Christ—now—with the Amen.

It is significant that in the liturgy now being prepared for most Lutherans of America there is provision for the communicant to complete the action of the communion with the Amen. As each element is received by him, at the moment of its reception, the Amen may be said.

As thereby it is the Amen that thus makes the church, see what has happened to the church by observing what has happened to the Amen. In the play, *Harriet,* the principal character is an overworked, distraught mother who at one place throws down her hands in dismay and discourage-

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ment as she says with infinite weariness, "I'm tired, clear into the future." These people there at worship are tired. They show it; they worship like it. If one were to sing out the great *Sursum Corda,* you would think the lifting up of their hearts is the heaviest, most hopeless, dullest task on earth! A friend told me, although I hardly believe it, that one of his members, a businessman, explained his noteworthy, regular attendance in this way: "You know, pastor, it is so good to be able to come into church where it is restful and not have to think about anything."

In agony the church must ask itself, what now must be done if the core of reverence is gone so that people do not even attend more than two-fifths of the time and, when they do, are disinterested and irreverent?

### The Great Invitation

One day in looking over the first volume of LeWar's musical settings of the *Introits,* I noticed the introduction written by Franklin Clark Fry. One paragraph especially stood out, for it had been written shortly after World War II: "According to Europeans, the secret behind the recent terrible apostasy was simple. Most men had stopped worshiping! They first stayed away from divine service. After ignoring that fountainhead of grace they inevitably sank down through one blighting stage of deterioration after another. One-time Christians sagged into futile self-reliance; then slipped further into a fatal spiritual bareness; and finally plunged into depravity and viciousness. It's no wonder that the wisest men of faith, seeing the shattering results of infidelity, are now building a fresh theology with the church's worship at its heart." So! Let all the people say Amen!

Then let the church realize once again with brilliant clarity and with sharp focus the very heart of the Amen in the present hour. As I come to God I realize I do not have to wait to praise him. My fellowship with him is not attained after a long and painful training process. For this is the Gospel: That he invites us to come, come now; and he calls us to come to him just as we are, no matter whether we be broken, or soiled, or anxious. However, we are, come!

This is justification by faith, that I do not have to present a pure heart or a disciplined soul or a finished life. I couldn't if I wanted to! He asks me to come and stand before him, no matter who I am, what I've done, where I've been. He will bring me into his fellowship, as he calls out, "Him who comes to me I will not cast out."

### Eternal Fellowship

God's action thereby is not gradual, it is not suspicious, it is not cautious. It is decisive, immediate and eager. It is so to such an extent that I cannot be any more a child of God than I am now as I stand before him. I cannot be more forgiven than I am at the present moment. I cannot be more loved, more accepted than I am in the *now* of my existence. Wholly and completely I can belong to him; and to that shattering, staggering love I now stand up and say Amen!

When God, through Word and sacrament, confronts man in sin and death, enmity is dissolved, and eternal fellowship is consumated in the Amen.

Then as Neander writes in those strikingly relevant last lines of his finest hymn:

> Let the Amen
> Sound from His people again
> Gladly for aye we adore Him.

## TITLES AND TEXTS

**What Pulpit Readers are Preaching About**

GRAHAM R. HODGES, First Congregational, Ticonderoga, N. Y. "Where were the wise men of Israel?" Matt. 2:1—*Behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.*

J. RUSSELL DUNLAP, Chanceford Presbyterian, Woodbine, Pa. "No Idle Tale!" Luke 24:11—*But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them.*

L. W. HAUTER, First Presbyterian, Oelwein, Iowa. "God's Priorities." Matt 6:33 (R.S.V.)—*Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well.*

HARVEY G. QUANDT, Bayard-Greenbrier Methodist, Bayard, Iowa. "The Uniqueness of Christianity." Col. 1:19—*For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.*

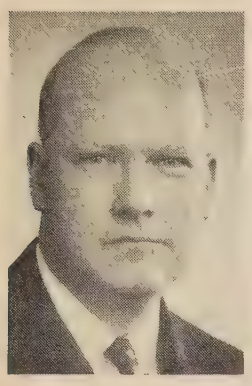
HARRISON DAVIS, First Methodist, New Rochelle, N. Y. "Was It the Whale, Jonah?" Jonah 2:7—

> *When my soul fainted within me,*
> *I remembered the Lord.*

CHARLIE W. SHEDD, First Presbyterian, Ponca City, Okla. "When Life Goes Dry." I Sam. 3:1—*And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.*

ANDREW PERRIN BURTON, First Baptist, Rensselaer, N. Y. "Tampering with Tradition." I Kings 21:3—*And Naboth said unto Ahab, "The Lord forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my fathers."*

E. CARROLL CONDICT, Burma Baptist Mission, Thayetmyo, Burma. "How to Spot Them." John 13:35—*By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*



# Dream and Reality

**By Herbert W. Hansen**

*She . . . laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.* Luke 2:7.

ON that first Christmas Eve two thousand years ago, a young couple had embarked on an arduous journey. Millions of young people will be traveling in our country this Christmas Eve, but they will be *going home*. Joseph and Mary were journeying *away* from home. And upon reaching Bethlehem, they found "there was no place for them in the inn." It was the miracle of the first Christmas that, in spite of disappointment, there was glory and warmth in the stable.

Here we see the Christmas paradox in the eternal contrast between inn and stable—the inn where we would like to be and the hard path of life as it is, the conflict between the ideal and the real.

When we are faced with this conflict between our dreams and the brutal reality of life, one of two things can happen to us: we may let ourselves become the victims of our frustrations or we can turn the stable into a place of glory. The stable made no difference to the adoring shepherds who ordinarily slept beneath the stars, or to the Magi who had been traveling by night for weeks, yet the inn at Bethlehem was poor enough. Ofttimes the difference between the inn and the stable is exaggerated out of all proportion in our minds. The birth of the Baby and the love of the parents glorified that humble place.

### Closed Inns

The fact is that most people who have lived significantly have done so not because their dreams came true but because they were able to face with courage the door of some closed inn and make the stable a place of glory.

It is said that of all the letters Phillips Brooks received, he cherished most one from a Boston tailor near Copley Square who wrote:

> I am a tailor in a little shop near your church. Whenever I have the opportunity, I always go to hear you preach. Each time I hear you preach I seem to forget all about you, for you make me think of God.

That was high praise for a man for whom the ministry was a stable, not an inn. The inn of Phillips Brooks' desire was to be a teacher. After graduation from college, he had tried to teach, but had failed.

In one sense Brooks never recovered from this disappointment. At the height of his career, when he was the most popular preacher in the United States, he was offered a teaching position at Harvard. He came down from the office of President Eliot white and trembling, having declined what he knew he might fail at again. This time the door of the inn was irrevocably closed. It was his last opportunity to become a teacher. But how he glorified the stable to which he had to retreat!

### The Ideal and the Real

Brooks had an ideal, but the door of the inn was closed. He had to make a new life elsewhere. In a sense, that life was alien to his desires. Many ministers who have glorified their profession find it is not the ideal life that some persons think it to be. Often it is more like a stable than an inn, but these men make it glorious.

The whole brief and tragic life of Jesus is much more like a stable than an inn. But in his heart was always the dream: he must do the work of his Father who sent him. He was almost 30 years of age before he could give a few brief months to that ministry. During that period he said to himself, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head." Jesus never lived in a dream world of his desires.

The world of Christ was very hard and very real, with its ruling ideas from the time of his birth symbolized by Rome, Herod and the slaughter of the innocents. In that world he had to live and make his contribution. It was a stable, not an inn. At the end of the hard and weary way was a criminal's gibbet, not a throne and kingly crown. But how he glorified the cross!

### Appropriate Celebration

Lending poignancy to our joy and lighting Christmas Day with something more than candles is the fact that the glory of Christmas was found in the stable, not the inn; in a Baby, not in the palace of Herod. To be kindly, to be unselfish, to keep the spirit of Christmas in our hearts even when the promise of Christmas is still unfulfilled—this is to celebrate beautifully and appropriately the birth of the Child.

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*HERBERT W. HANSEN in 1928 helped to organize the Community Baptist Church in Scarsdale, N. Y., which he still serves as minister. He is a graduate of the University of Chicago divinity school which in 1950 named him "Alumnus of the Year."*

# CONFESSION OF THE WITCH DOCTOR

*A Sermon for Children*

**By Grover Wilson**

*Huguenot Memorial Church, Pelham, N. Y.*

HIGH in the mountains of Guatemala, a small country in Central America about the size of our state of Ohio, live three million people. Most of them are descendants of the Maya Indians, a proud and highly civilized group of people. Many of them live in the mountains much as their kinsmen have lived for hundreds of years. They still dress in colorful costumes, speak a little-known language, grow their own food, and go barefooted.

Families are large, and in almost every household there is a small baby being carried papoose-fashion on the mother's back. Many of the people still worship the ancient gods. Even today one may see their sacred mountains with sacred and magic camp sites on them. One mountain we visited had fourteen magic spots on it. A magic spot is one that a witch doctor has picked out by a funny shaped rock, or by a strangely twisted tree. A wide bare spot is made by leveling the ground and by sweeping it clean and bare. At one end a small stone shrine is often put up by placing a few rocks on top of each other. Here the sacred fire is kindled, and here the witch doctor—who is priest, doctor and judge—often goes to sacrifice a chicken. On the edge of these magic spots are many chicken feathers. But the center of the magic spot is kept clean and swept, with not even a footprint on it.

### Learns of Jesus

The witch doctor, for a gift or for money, will take a chicken to the magic spot, light smoky candles, pray strange prayers, and sacrifice the chicken on the crude stone altar in order to try to get a better crop for somebody, or to heal a sick child, or to get revenge. The witch doctor is an important man and is feared by many. He wears a great black coat with jewels and pins and a black cap trimmed in red. He chants strange songs.

One witch doctor not long ago heard about Jesus, his love and his way of life. He became unhappy over his old way of life and saw that the Jesus way was much better. Yet, he did not want to give up the importance and the security of his position as a witch doctor.

Gradually, through his contacts with Christian missionaries and through his own prayers and thoughts, he came to see that the only way for his future was the Jesus way. And he made the great confession that has marked Christians down through the centuries, "Jesus Christ is Lord," and "Jesus Christ is Lord of my life."

This former witch doctor found a joy and a happiness in the Jesus way of life that he had not known before. He began telling his friends of the Jesus way and encouraging them to make the great Christian confession and choice.

### Great Confession

Now, you and I are not witch doctors in a picturesque far away land, but we will be expected some day to make the great confession that all Christians make. Through our experience at home and in many ways in the Sunday school and church, we are being prepared to choose the Jesus way of living. Almost every day we can take part in it. Jesus said, "As you wish that men would do to you, do so to them." Love your mother and father and be kind, helpful and cheerful to others. As we do these things each day, we shall be making real preparation to confess, as the witch doctor confessed, "Truly Jesus is the Lord of my life and him truly will I serve."

# *Pulpit Post*

### Pulpit 'Greenhouse'?

SIR: Ralph W. Loew (August) says, "The use of material . . . twisted by inaccuracies is unforgivable. It alienates the listener and puts a roadblock on the path of a man's progress." Amen! But I shall be more lenient with him and forgive his own inaccuracy in attributing to Jeremiah, Ezekiel's words, "I sat where they sat."

The main stumbling block was his use of illustrations. Although he calls Loyal H. Larimer's statement a fine one in advising against the excessive use of illustrations, my calculations indicate that Mr. Loew gave 45 to 50 per cent of his space to illustrative material—stories and quotations from others. How far can a preacher go on using "windows" and still not have a "greenhouse"? If one uses his own material and imagination for only half of his sermons or articles, is that enough solid foundation and super-structure to view through the "windows"?

Washington Presbyterian, Corrytown, Tenn. — A. THOMAS HORST.

### Pulpit Town Criers

SIR: Bravo to Morton Enslin on his recent exposé of pulpit town criers. In churches such as the one I serve, when the service moves from prayer to offertory, nothing ruins the mood of worship more completely and destroys the residual effect of the prayers more thoroughly than the abominable practice of making announcements. Let us use our one short hour to worship God and leave all other matters to the local gazette or the parish newsletter.

Evangelical and Reformed, Ridgway, Pa. — RICHARD E. KNELLER.

*(More Pulpit Post letters on page 24)*

# Pulpit Paragraphs

## Contributed by Readers of The Pulpit

### • *Say It with Music*

THE florists have a slogan, "Say it with Flowers." St. Luke, when he wrote the Christmas story, might have paraphrased such a slogan to read, "Say it with music." He surrounded the birth of Jesus with songs—the Song of the Angel, Gabriel; the Song of Elizabeth; the Song of Zacharias; the Song of the Angels; the Song of Simeon and the Song of Mary, known as the *Magnificat*. Christianity was born with a song. "Where song is, pause and listen—evil men have no song." Alexander Pope once asked, "What will a child learn sooner than a song?" Yes, and what will a child remember longer? The soul of music is the music of the soul.

The Song of Mary is one of the great revolutionary songs of all human history. The revolution it celebrates is the only kind that is radical and lasting, for it takes place in the heart where Christ shatters all our worldly values and supplants them with his own.

A foreign missionary's little son at school here in America always kept his father's picture above his desk. Visiting him one Christmas, his teacher asked, "What do you want most this year?" Looking up at the beloved face above him, the lad replied, "I want my father to step out of his frame." We are chosen to inherit the benediction of those, who, not having seen, believe. But the living truth in the *Magnificat* is that God is a personal Savior, a power in divine grace, a promise for the oppressed, and a redemption for the nations. This God can "step out" of the lovely Christmas setting and move again among us.—*John G. Simmons, St. Matthew's Lutheran, North Hollywood, Calif.*

### • *Bedlam and the Bartenders*

IT has been said that wisdom may be found in unexpected places. The truth of this statement was illustrated to me by a Christmas card. This particular card stood out above all others because of its content and its sender—a bartender. The card was entitled, "Bedlam out of Bethlehem," and this is what it said:

> It is unbelievable that men could take a word like Bethlehem, so glorious and beautiful, and make out of it a synonym for confusion and disorder. Yet this is what has happened. St. Mary of Bethlehem was founded as a hospital in England in 1247. Two centuries later it was turned into a hospital for the insane. The noise and confusion of that institution became known throughout the country. The original name, through contraction and corruption, was changed to Bedlam.
>
> There is little in a name, and if there were no more here than the corruption of a word we would be unconcerned. In many ways we make bedlam out of Bethlehem. The Christmas season itself has become, not a time of quiet thought and meditation and spiritual joy, but one of worldly greed and noise. The frantic pushing through mobs in last minute Christmas buying; the carousing on Christmas Day—these are not in accord with the message of Christmas. We have made *bedlam out of Bethlehem.*

I cannot attest to the historical accuracy of this piece, nor for its originality, but I can testify to its sincerity. Since the sender, the bartender, operates in my "Skid Row Parish," I knew him, but this card sent me back to know him better. I have found knowing him better a rewarding experience. In "Bedlam Out of Bethlehem" he was expressing what he saw and felt about life.—*Thomas B. Richards, Director, Men's Service Center, Rochester, N. Y.*

### Pulpit Calendar

Dec. 6—2nd Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 13—3rd Sunday in Advent. Universal Bible Sunday.
Dec. 20—4th Sunday in Advent.
Dec. 25—Christmas.
Dec. 27—1st Sunday after Christmas.
Dec. 31—New Year's Eve.
Jan. 1—Festival of the Christening.
Jan. 3—2nd Sunday after Christmas.
Jan. 3-10—Universal Week of Prayer.
Jan. 6—The Epiphany of Our Lord.
Jan. 10—1st Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 17—2nd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 17-23—Church and Economic Life Week.
Jan. 24—3rd Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 31—4th Sunday after Epiphany.
Jan. 31-Feb. 7—Youth Week.
Feb. 7—5th Sunday after Epiphany.
Feb. 14—6th Sunday after Epiphany. Race Relations Sunday.
Feb. 21—7th Sunday after Epiphany. Day of Prayer for Students.
Feb. 21-28—Brotherhood Week.
Feb. 28—8th Sunday after Epiphany.
Mar. 3—Ash Wednesday. First day of Lent.
SEASONS: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent.
ALTAR COLORS: Advent, violet; Christmas, Epiphany and Pre-Lenten, white; Lent, violet.

*(Pulpit Calendar lists dates in the calendar of the Christian year and other observances of national or religious significance.)*

### • *Highways to Christmas*

DURING Advent we have been speaking of various roads that lead to Christmas. We have studied the road of prophecy that leads through the pages of the Old Testament Scriptures with their remarkable passages by the prophets. We have looked at the road of the humble, for humility of spirit and attitude must exist in any pilgrim who would come to Christmas. We have noted the road of the wise—a road not walked by many of those accounted wise by the world. But this morning we portray, not a road that we must travel, but a road that must be open for the Almighty God to travel to our hearts.

It was God who made Christmas. No one else could have made it. And God made it for just this purpose: to build himself a highway to the human heart. A way had to be found into the darkness of this world, into its sinfulness, its cruelty and strife, its misery, wretchedness and death. And God found that way in the Christmas event, in the coming of his incarnate Love into the life of this world, by letting that Love be born in infant form, wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.

Now that that highway has been built, it is here in our world. Christmas is an event that *has happened.* It only needs yet to be accepted. To do this, faith alone is needed, for faith is the acceptance of the love of God offered us in Jesus Christ: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." Faith is just this opening of the heart to God who would build a highway into our hearts so that in the light of his love our hearts might grow radiant with the love of his Son.

Christmas joy is not limited to any December 25, and its light is not extinguished with the lights on our holiday greens once the love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts.—*Roland H. Pantermuehl, Salem Evangelical and Reformed, Clayton, Mo.*

### • *McCarthy, Mathews and The Ministers*

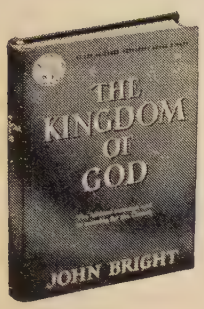
ALTHOUGH only a few of our fellow pastors were actually named in the much discussed *Mercury* article by Matthews, all of us are indirectly involved. Members of our profession as a group have been maligned. Our ministry in the field of the social imperatives has been challenged. Our calling has fallen victim to dangerous smear tactics and disastrous character assassination. Our Protestant faith has been singled out and shamefully misrepresented.

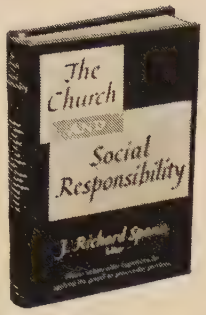
Most glaring of all the indignities of the Matthews article is his closing inference that the students of Walter Rauschenbusch are, by their association with his philosophy of Christianizing the social order, subject to the charge of disloyalty to good Americanism. This effort to link the social ethics of the Rauschenbusch school with Communist subversives is the saddest of all evils emanating from this current epidemic of McCarthyism.

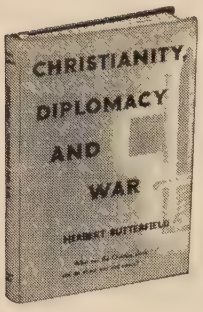
By and large the great social gains of our century were the results of the high insights, the holy commitments and the heroic social pioneering of the pastors, preachers and prophets of the Kingdom of God who were sen-

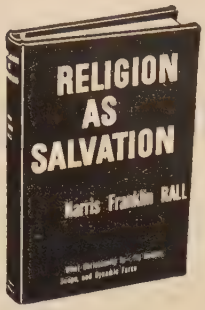
*(Continued on page 26)*

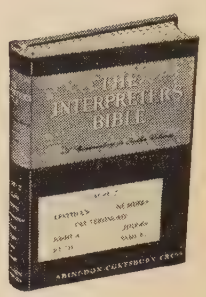
# The Year's OUTSTANDING Books









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## Pulpit Patter

*By Morton S. Enslin*

# 'Now See Here, Young Man'

As a rule I refrain from introducing references to church music, organists and choirs into this column. My reasons are many and adequate. (1) I do not wish to seem to scratch in another man's well ploughed field—that should at once set Mr. Emurian at rest; (2) my wife has long been a member of the music committee in our local church, and thus I have a front row seat for what exceeds any wrestling match TV can put up for continuous interest and excitement; (3) my knowledge of music is so severely limited that I am quite content to classify music into but two sorts: what I like and what I don't. (Thus by and large my critics may have the satisfying feeling that even if *they* can't get under my skin, I am nonetheless not without severe discipline and even punishment in the course of an average year's attendance in the sanctuary). Any one of these reasons is enough to keep me from meddling where I don't belong. But since probably most of my readers do not really have any more expert knowledge in these matters than I—and I cheerfully repeat I have none, although some of them may be less aware of that sad fact—I venture at least this once.

I am increasingly leery of the title which is fast becoming a must for a really up-and-coming church: minister of music. Perhaps it was inevitable. Such honest descriptives as *undertaker, real-estate man, maid,* and so on down the line proved inadequate years ago; *mortician* and *realtor* took their places momentarily, only in turn to yield to the more colorful, even if less descriptive, appelatives of the moment. So if an organist or choirmaster hankers after the fleshpots, why not? Unfortunately it does not stop there. In too many churches, unless my clerical friends are basely misleading me, the musical ordinand at once feels that he and the "other" minister (not of music) are on a par so far as running the services is concerned. He must have full charge of selecting not only the choir numbers but the hymns; and not infrequently he gets spiritually hot and bothered because the pastor reads too extended passages for the Scripture lessons (which is undoubtedly the case) and preaches such long sermons that the singers' style is cramped. And he feels it is his sacred duty—his choir school has impressed that upon him—to tell his brother all about it and to advise him please to stay within bounds.

### Plain Talk

At that interesting moment, the pastor, if he has the brains he was born with, will tell his dear young brother some of the hitherto neglected facts of life: that he (the pastor), and he alone, is responsible for the running of the service; that he will arrange the service and select the hymns (with the tunes he prefers); that if the minister of music is a good boy, he may select the preludes (so long as they stay within advertised bounds), the choir numbers (if he has reasonable taste), and the particular *Amen* to be sung at the end of the service.

But I hope the pastor will go a step further and suggest in a tone kind and gentle, but firm, that if the minister of music is not himself the musician at the keyboard, the latter is to be told that the phrase "silence is golden" applies to more than speech; that during prayers the organ is not to attempt a holy obligato, forcing the minister to increase his lung power to the breaking point in trying to let the congregation hear what they are praying for; that even during the time of the announcement of the offering—in churches which still persist in having announcements—it is very embarrassing to try to talk against organ pipes; that, in a nutshell, even if one of the pipes is styled *vox humana,* its function is not to drown out the living voice simply because it is run by electricity.

While he is at it, the pastor might whisper in the now chastened ear that he doesn't see why it is necessary for the organist to be so long in shifting musical gears before the Doxology, for example. If he has been playing something else, let him come to a full stop and then make an honest new start.

If the minister of music proves amenable and promises to live a better life hereafter, perhaps that will be enough for the first lesson. If not, he may be advised of the deepening conviction that after all the *prime* purpose of any choir is to lead the congregation in the reverential and hearty singing of hymns; that within reasonable bounds there may well be a place for a competent and well trained choir to continue leadership of the congregation's worship with well chosen anthems, but that its members are to cease to feel themselves entertainers, featuring melodramatic numbers such as "Our Father, Which Art in Heaven" because it chances to have a popular tune. There is undoubtedly a legitimate place for concert music, but a Sunday morning service of worship is not one of them.

Yes, I am quite aware of the famous word about those who essay to enter ground where angels fear to tread. Selah.

### Bulletin Board Sentences

*Contributed by F. Rodham Dowson, South Croydon Methodist, Surrey, England*

The church is here for your sake. Use it.

Lambs gambol; men gamble. Both get shorn.

You couldn't care less? God couldn't care more.

Excuse me, where are you going—eventually?


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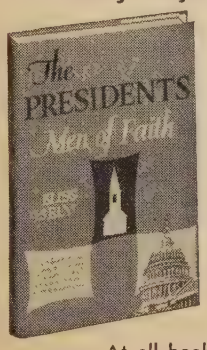


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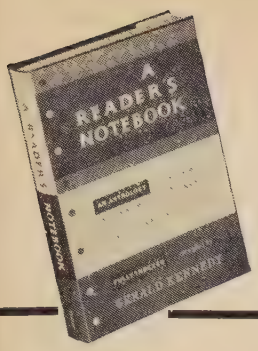


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# Pulpit Post

### Are Liberals Fleeing?

SIR: "Christian Radicals" by O. Walter Wagner (Oct.) was the most timely and challenging article I have read in your estimable magazine in many years. Most of our churches have had a set of social ideals, yet the majority of our members do not know that such principles have even been formulated by their churches. This is a fatal condition, for which we ministers are almost altogether to blame. It is even more pathetic that so many of our professed social liberals have now fled before the barrage of criticism that charges them with being "fellow travelers."

Gonzales, Texas. H. M. RATLIFF.

### Prefers an Agency

SIR: I am chagrined over the article by Hillyer Straton, "On Your Own to the Holy Land" (Nov.). Dr. Straton purports to know the travel business from one trip; his comments on costs are not always accurate; he does not tell how much time will be lost standing around steamship offices and airports, validating tickets, locating a hotel, contacting sightseeing services, hiring cars, bargaining, getting involved at consulates—the thousand and one details involved in a trip abroad that take half day after half day, not counting the days everything shuts up for holidays, especially in the Near East.

While travel in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan is easier by far than 20 years ago, it is still not comparable to travel in Europe or the States, and creation of the Republic of Israel has increased its difficulties. To save time, energy and expense in touring the Holy Land, a reliable agency is certainly the answer but it should be an agency which specializes in this area and knows the problems involved.

HARRIET-LOUISE H. PATTERSON.
Department of Old Testament,
Schauffler College,
Cleveland, Ohio.

SIR: After reading Hillyer H. Straton's article, "On Your Own to the Holy Land," (Nov.), I thought your readers would be interested to learn about the travel program of the American Friends of the Middle East, Inc.

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PHYLLIS VAN HORN,
Travel Director.
American Friends of the Middle East, Inc.,
139 E. 57th St.,
New York 22, N. Y.

### Quaker Meeting Silence

SIR: Now I know! The ideal service for Enslin would be an unprogrammed, utterly silent Quaker meeting without music, minister or message. These would be Quaker contemplatives who have vowed to refrain from all speaking. The only thing left to scrutinize with brilliant abrasiveness would be architecture. DON E. SMUCKER.
Bethany Biblical Seminary,
Chicago, Ill.

### From Every Pulpit

SIR: This is just a word in support of F. W. Burnham's letter (Nov.) rebuking the critical attitude of Roy W. Abel concerning the sermon "The Great Fear" (June). Mr. Lowell's sermon is the type that ought to be preached from every pulpit in America. I rejoice to know that that kind of preaching is going on in the nation's capital. Give us more sermons like it.

EMERSON G. HANGEN.
First Congregational,
Long Beach, Calif.

### 'The Word'

SIR: I wish to express my appreciation of both the style and content of "The Word," by Clyde M. Allison (Sept.). It made inspiring as well as intensely interesting reading.

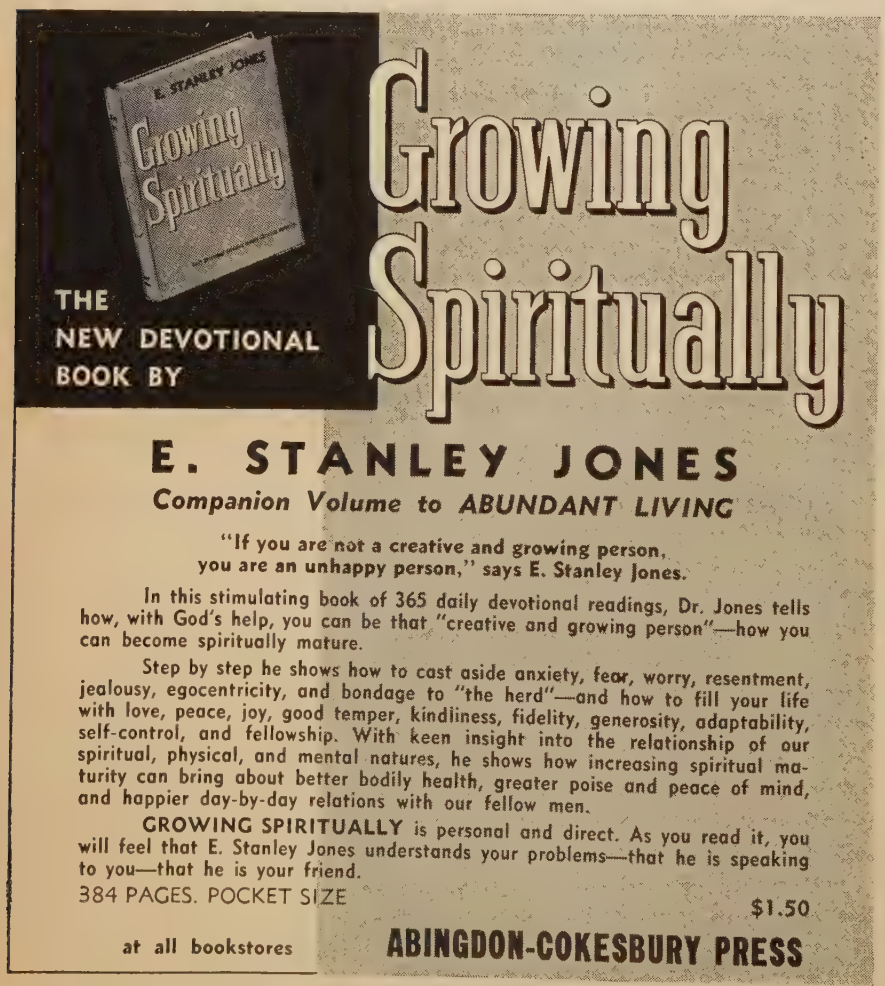
D. L. GORDON.
United Church of Canada,
Morewood, Ontario.

SIR: I liked the style of "The Word" and would welcome other sermons written in similar manner.

HENRY A. GUY.
Wesley Memorial Methodist,
Jacksonville, Fla.

### Wants Another 'Thought'

SIR: I find it distressing that Charles Clayton Morrison, in his November "Thought for the Month," has stooped to the currently popular pastime of taking pot shots at the liberals. May I suggest that he give us another "thought" on this subject after he has read Simeon Stylites' remarks on page 1161 of the *Christian Century* under the title "Paging Noah Webster"? MARVIN A. JOHNSON.
Community Methodist,
El Segundo, Calif.

## Wise Men from the West

*(Continued from page 14)*

in his heart that he would not defile himself with the wine and rich food of the king's table. Below him stands Elijah, who in an hour of crisis challenged God's people with these dramatic words: "If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him."

Let us stop right there, as I paraphrase Elijah's challenge and interpret it for our day and age: "If Saturn be God, then follow him; let Bacchus be your king and Epicurus your prophet: 'Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow you die.' But if God is the Father who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son be God, let Christ be your King and Paul your prophet: 'Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God? So glorify God in your body.'"

Almighty Framer of the skies!
Oh! let my pure devotion rise
Like incense in thy sight. . . .
How shall I celebrate the day
When God appeared in mortal clay? . . .
This is the Lord of all the earth
This is the King of Kings. . . .
Tell me, how may I join in this holy feast
With all the kneeling world, and I of all the least?
"Fear not, O faithful heart, but bring what most is meet;
Bring love and purity and truth, and lay them at His feet."[2]

## Serving a Grown-up Christ

*(Continued from page 15)*

us, but we cringe when he says forthrightly to us at the height of his divine manhood, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." No child would ever have said that.

Those who confine their Christian activities mainly to Christmas are like the mother who fondly wants to keep her child always a baby. She "babies" him far beyond the period of his infancy, calls him by the names she used when he was in her arms, seems never to realize that he has become a boy or a youth or a man. Possessively she hinders his development into a mature, self-reliant adult.

With Christians across the world, these people who refuse to let Jesus grow up have just completed another celebration of Christmas. For a few days they seemed very religious indeed. They went to church, they sang carols, they let their thoughts turn toward the Baby Jesus, the manger, the Christmas story. But for most of them, Christ is now "laid by." They will now resume their normal way of life without any real dedication to Jesus. They will not take Jesus through the new year with them. They have left him in the manger.

Paul said, "When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways." For us to bring our adoration to the Babe of Bethlehem was not childish—it was beautiful and right—but to *stop* there is childish. We must go *beyond* Christmas. We must serve a grown-up Christ.

[2]Adapted from "A Hymn for Christmas" by Thomas Chatterton and "A Christmas Hymn" by Richard Watson Gilder.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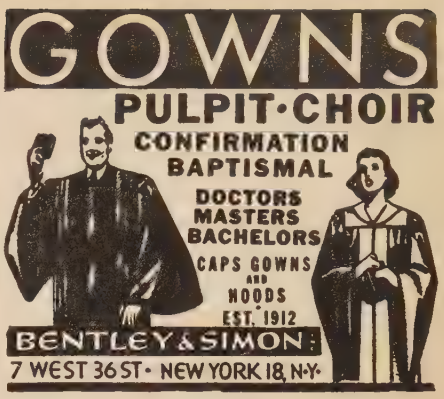


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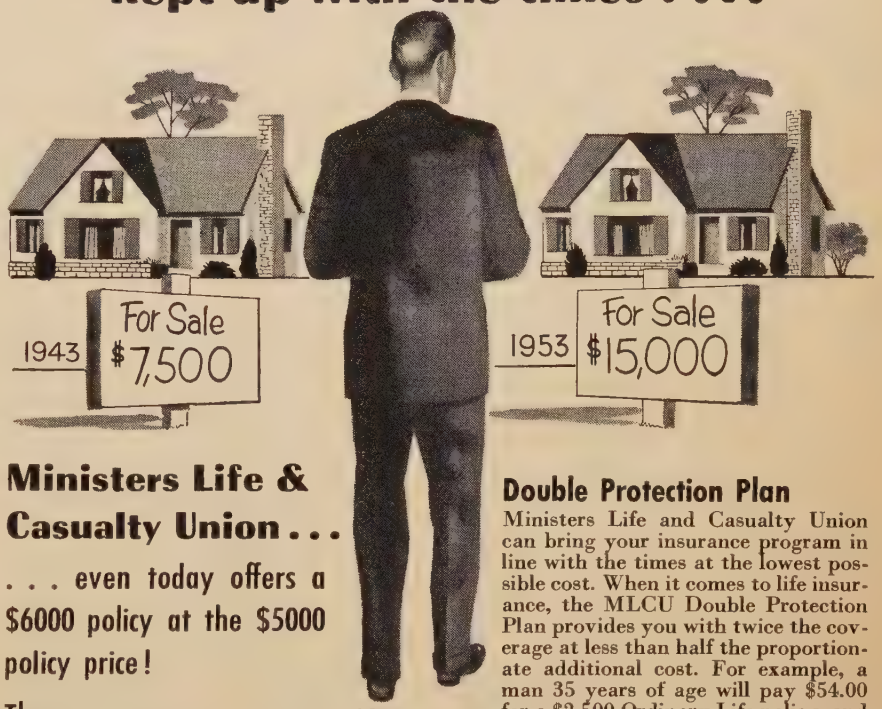


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# Pulpit Paragraphs

*(Continued from page 20)*

sitized by the spiritual leadership of Rauschenbusch. Matthews attempts to substitute the hammer and sickle for the cross in the heart of every courageous prophet of social justice, of every concerned Christian pacifist, of every committed parish minister. He wants all modern social prophets to be seen as subversives. This is the real evil of his article.—*O. Walter Wagner, Executive Director, Metropolitan Church Federation of Greater St. Louis.*

### • *God's Best Seller*

ACCORDING to reviews, Dr. Kinsey's books paint a very sordid picture of the sexual behavior of modern men and women. A certain cartoon pictured these two books in the upper half of the panel. In the lower half of the panel was another book, open; it was the Holy Bible. And the words of the seventh commandment were highlighted: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." The caption of the cartoon read, "Sex Advice from Another Best Seller."—*Robert H. McKee, Presbyterian, Dansville, N. Y.*

### • *To Men Who Need A Savior*

IN one of the newer parks of Oslo, overlooking the beautiful fjord of Norway's capital city, stand literally hundreds of stone-carved figures portraying vividly mankind in the various stages and conditions of his mundane existence here upon this earth. Each of these so-called "life statues" depicts some normal human experience common to the everyday life of all men. None of these powerfully built, naked figures is at all idealized in its conception. There is the baby feeding contentedly at the breast of his doting mother, the little boy resting two limp hands in the mighty grip of his venerable grandfather and casting his admiring glance trustingly up into the old man's wisdom-filled countenance. There is the bawling brat with clenched fists shrieking his defiance, the tiny doubled-up frame wincing with the pain of a stomach-ache. There is the husky laborer with a massive sledge hammer poised above his sinewy shoulder to strike, the husband and wife entwined in rapturous embrace, the beaming father swinging his laughing baby "up in the air so blue," the expressionless old sage sitting stoically beside his senile wife. Hardly a human situation or emotion is omitted in this impressive series of thick-necked, earth-bound figures.

At the end of the row, atop an elevated terrace rises the awesome "Pillar of Life," a tall cylindrical column whose outer surface is covered by a sheer mass of sculptured shapes and forms, ascending the pillar in spiral fashion. Here is mankind in the brutal struggle for life, each clawing and scratching and kicking to get to the top of the heap, clutching for dear life to the one just above him, striving frantically to raise himself by pulling down the other, boosting the children up over his own head to an otherwise inaccessible level.

These are the people God had in view when he sent the Savior—not the high and mighty, not the secure and unruffled, not the contented and pious, but the slaving struggling people who worry and are troubled, who get discouraged and downtrodden, who grow sick and lonely, who know sorrow and grief, the ones who must fight to survive and to provide for their children, the ones who fall into despair and lose all hope.

God's son came not to royalty but to peasantry: his mother was not a queen but a simple maiden; his father was not a prince but a carpenter. He came to be a *Savior* to men who *need* a Savior, desperately.—*Edward A. Cooperrider, Unity Lutheran, St. Louis, Mo.*

### • *The Path to Peace*

WE can even teach ourselves to approach the Russians with sympathy and understanding. There are few thinking people in this country today who would minimize the difficulties involved in such a course. There are few thinking people who have any illusions about the ultimate ends of Russian communism. There are few thinking people who have any respect for appeasement if that be conceived as compromise with basic principle. But still we must reject the concept that "peace can emerge from an arms race, or that problems can be solved by dropping A-bombs." We must remember that "humanity is a circle which needs but to be touched at one point for a vibration to run through the whole." And we must refuse to forget that the interests which the Russian nation and ours have in common are far greater than the points of difference between us.—*Roy M. Pearson, Hancock Congregational, Lexington, Mass.*

### • *Heart-Room and House-Room*

IN his *Training in Christianity*, Soren Kierkegaard observed that "where heart-room is, there house-room always is to be found." Our predicament is that we have plenty of house-room—the whole earth—but that we have not found the heart-room. If man now will apply himself assiduously to training in Christ's way, he will find room not only in his heart but in the world as well.—*Herschel T. Hamner, First Methodist, Attalla, Ala.*

## Ministry of Music

*By Ernest K. Emurian*

# Two Christmas Poems

### Carols of All Nations

WHEN Christmas time approaches
And familiar carols ring,
The peoples of the world march in,
Each with a song to sing;
I think the Heavenly Father planned
That it should be this way,
To bind a broken, shattered world
In one, each Christmas Day.

The Englishman, George Handel,
Joins with Isaac Watts to sing
"Joy to the world, the Lord is come,
Let earth receive her King."
While Frenchman Adolphe Adam
The organ's chambers swell,
To play a matchless melody,
His "Cantique de Noel."

The British sing their rousing carol,
Driving gloom away,
"God rest ye merry, gentlemen,
Let nothing you dismay";
While Welshmen, gathering round the board,
In festive mood and jolly,
Unite to swell the chorus,
"Deck the halls with boughs of holly."

"The First Noel" from Britain,
And "Torches Bring" from France;
"It came upon a midnight clear"
From a Unitarian manse;
The Italian poet, Christina Rosetti,
Gives the rhyme,
"Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, love divine."

Phillips Brooks, Bostonian,
Now lifts his voice on high:
"O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie";
While unknown ancient Latins
The same old story tell
In "Adeste Fidelis"
And "Veni Immanuel."

The Polish children sing a song
As lovely as them all,
"Infant holy, infant lowly,
For his bed a cattle stall."
While German children sing
A native lullaby instead,
In Luther's "Away in a manger,
No crib for a bed."

The humble poor of every land
Sing all the world around,
"While shepherds watched their flocks by night
All seated on the ground";
And "Angels from the realms"
And "As with gladness men of old";
While "We three kings of orient"
The guiding star behold.

We "Hail to the Lord's Annointed"
"In Dulci Jubilo,"
While Frenchmen sing their "Gloria
In Excelsis Deo."
And "Good King Wencelas looks out"
To see the wonders there,
While Americans are caroling,
"There's a song in the air."

For Charles Wesley, Methodist,
The heavenly anthems ring,
With Mendelssohn, the Jew,
In "Hark, the herald angels sing";
While Mohr and Gruber, Austrians,
Put darkness all to flight,
And sing for us the universal fav'rite,
"Silent Night."

Around the throne of God we'll join
And sing these songs one day,
With "every kindred, every tribe"
When earth has passed away.
We'll "hail the power of Jesus' name"
While "angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem
And crown him Lord of all!"

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*New Book*

***A new volume,* Plays and Pageants for Many Occasions, *by Ernest K. Emurian has just come off the press.* *See review on page 29.***

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### Christmas: That Was and Is to Be

*The Christmas That Was*

THERE is laughter now in Bethlehem,
For in a cattle stall
Sleeps an infant whom the angels say
Is King and Lord of all;
There is wonder, too, in Bethlehem,
Within a mother's eyes,
Who clasps a baby to her breast
While music fills the skies.

There is mystery in Bethlehem,
For wise men from afar
Come riding through the narrow streets
While following a star;
They lay their costly gifts in homage
At the infant's feet,
And bow before the babe in whom
The heaven and earth now meet.

The night rolls back like magic
And the heavens are rent in twain;
Angelic legions cry "All Hail!"
Earth rings with the refrain.
Tens of thousands, countless millions,
Like the sands that mark the sea,
From the battlements of heaven
Hail the Year of Jubilee!

*The Christmas That Is to Be*

THERE is joy in Copenhagen,
There is laughter in Paree;
Estonians are singing hymns
Along the Baltic Sea;
Sevastopol rejoices as her children
Laugh and play;
And Rotterdam rebuilds her walls
And hails His natal day!
On the saddened face of Europe
There is gaiety and mirth;
For the angels sing of peace again,
In honoring His birth!

There is food for starving Athens,
And in Moscow church bells ring;
Old Notre Dame is crowded
As Parisians hail their King.
The cloisters of Westminster
Echo hymns of joy and praise;
The Bishop of Cologne proclaims
The hope of better days.
And plundered, helpless millions,
From their hovels in the sod,
Stand enraptured as they gaze aloft
And catch a glimpse of God!

### A Pastoral Prayer

**By Paul S. Kershner**

*First Congregational, Akron, Ohio*

AS the eagle trusts its body to the kindly winds and as the eye seeks the candle through the dark, so may our spirits find rest in thee, O thou Father of us all.

We come to thee from a world in which there is much to disappoint and disturb; a world where men do not always act as brothers, where some live in scant and careless regard for others; a world where there is sordid seeking of pleasure, while the needy are sold for a pair of shoes, and the cry of the hungry falls dully upon the ears of those fat with comfort and leanness of soul.

For all qualities of mercy and justice, of truth and goodness which are in the ways of the world and in our ways too, we give thee our grateful thanks, knowing that thou art the giver of all good and perfect gifts.

Cause us so to behold thy face and to discern thy purposes that we may set our hands to all action and thought which will bring, for thy name's sake, yet more of honesty and decency and compassion into our lives and into the lives of others of whatever race or class or color.

Hear not alone, O God, this our public prayer, but more especially the silent private prayers which now ascend from our individual hearts, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

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## A REVIEW

THE CHURCH WE LOVE. By **Wilbur La Roe, Jr.** 79 pages. Abingdon-Cokesbury, $1.25. This is a layman's vital testimony on what the church has meant to him through the years. Wilbur La Roe has been one of the church's strongest spokesmen in our nation's capital where he is a practicing lawyer. A former moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., his evaluation of the church's present task will be a challenge to the laymen of every denomination.

ROUNDUP

# Books in Brief

**Reviewed by Alton M. Motter**

★★★★THE UNITED NATIONS AND OUR RELIGIOUS HERITAGE. By **Justin Wise Nixon.** 96 pages. Church Peace Union, 170 E. 64th St., New York 21, 50 cents (paper binding). What is the role of religion in achieving the objectives of the United Nations? This book by one of our country's finest church scholars helps to answer that question in a manner which will challenge the interest and action of every pastor who reads it. We dislike to repeat the trite phrase that a book belongs on a "must" list, but for the preacher who wants to be alert to his responsibility for establishing better international relations, this book *is* a *must!*

★LIVING IN FOUR DIMENSIONS. By **Gaston Foote.** 160 pages. Revell, $2.00. This volume of 15 sermons by a preacher whose sermons have appeared in The Pulpit will be read with interest and profit by many pastors. The sermons deal with specific life needs and overflow with usable illustrations and human interest situations that make them unusually appealing to the average church member.

★★SERMONS I LOVE TO PREACH. By **Edgar DeWitt Jones.** Harper, $2.50. This book presents 15 sermons of one of America's great preachers. It should comfort ministers who are sometimes apologetic about preaching a sermon the second time to know that Dr. Jones states frankly several were delivered in various forms "over 300 times." The author's literary skill, his analysis of human affairs in history, his understanding of the needs of the heart and of the great resources of the Scriptures all combine to make this book a joy to read. Many pastors will also be deeply rewarded with the first chapter where the author shares his sermonic secrets with the reader.

THE MINISTER'S PERSONAL GUIDE. By **Walter E. Schuette.** Harper, $2.95. This volume grows out of the writer's pastoral and administrative experience of 65 years and covers nearly every aspect of the pastor's personal and professional life. Some readers will feel that the author is overly sensitive about the minister's relationship to women and that he underestimates the pastor's community responsibility. However, most readers will be led to a closer scrutiny of their own ministry by this frank and fatherly "voice of experience."

★★★THE FUNCTION OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN DEALING WITH RELIGION. By the **Committee on Religion and Education,** American Council on Education, Washington, D. C. 145 pages, $2.00. This book deals with the most pressing question facing leaders in religion and education: "How can religious instruction be included in the curriculum of our public schools without violating our historic principle of the separation of church and state?" A study of the opinions of about 1,000 educators and religious leaders of all faiths, it offers, in the opinion of this reviewer, the best hope for a solution to this problem, namely, the factual study of religion on an experimental basis in a limited number of American communities where such plans can be developed mutually between educators and religious leaders.

★PREACHING FROM PICTURES. By **Kenneth W. Sollitt.** 150 pages. Wilde, $2.50. This handbook on the use of Christian art in worship appears in a revised edition. It contains 12 services of worship based on a number of religious art masterpieces. The sermon interpretations are homiletically suggestive for a variety of themes and occasions. The books should be helpful to pastors who believe the church must use more audio-visual aids to convey its message in this TV age.

★PREACHING THE MIRACLES OF JESUS. By **Hillyer H. Straton.** 223 pages. Abingdon-Cokesbury, $2.50. The author's thesis is that the miracles of Jesus offer a rich resource for modern preaching. He classifies Jesus' 33 miracles recorded in the New Testament under 5 general classifications such as "The Lord of Nature" and "The Great Healer," and suggests some of the homiletical values for each miracle. The volume is especially helpful in portraying the oriental setting in which the miracles occurred.

★★THE STUDENT PRAYER BOOK. Committee Chairman, **John Oliver Nelson.** Association Press, $2.00. This is probably the best collection of prayers and litanies for college and post-college youth to appear in our generation. Especially valuable to pastors working with student groups.

★★THE RECOVERY OF FAMILY LIFE. By **Elton** and **Pauline Trueblood.** Harper, $1.50. Out of 29 years' experience, Dr. and Mrs. Trueblood make their witness for Christian family living. Especially challenging is their interpretation of the Christian idea of the family, including the vocation of responsible motherhood and fatherhood. They believe the home must be the starting point for the Christian revolution and suggest workable ways of approach. A good antidote to Kinsey for both preacher and layman.

★PLAYS AND PAGEANTS FOR MANY OCCASIONS. By **Ernest K. Emurian.** Wilde, $2.50. The church music columnist of The Pulpit has produced an unusually helpful volume of 10 non-royalty, dramatic presentations for school and church use. Planned for such occasions as Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving and Mother's Day, the collection is most valuable for the fact that it is within the reach of the average church to present. Pastors who believe in church drama will want to add the book to their libraries.

*(★★★★You can't afford to be without it; ★★★Unusually valuable to the preacher; ★★Above average in its field; ★A good buy; No Star, depends on your taste and need.)*

## Books Preachers Are Reading

*An analysis based on reports from leading religious booksellers and from the reading of the Pulpit's distinguished editorial associates and book reviewers.*

| October | November | This Month | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 2 | 1 | **Preaching on Controversial Issues.** *Harold A. Bosley. Harper,* $3.00 |
| 2 | 1 | 2 | **The Unfinished Reformation.** *Charles Clayton Morrison. Harper,* $3.00 |
| 6 | 5 | 3 | **Report from Christian Europe.** *Stewart Winfield Herman. Friendship Press,* $2.50 |
| | 10 | 4 | **The Kingdom of God.** *John Bright. Abingdon-Cokesbury,* $3.75 |
| 9 | 8 | 5 | **What Present Day Theologians Are Thinking.** *Daniel D. Williams. Harper,* $2.00 |
| 10 | 9 | 6 | **The Christian Society.** *Stephen Neill. Harper,* $3.50 |
| 5 | 3 | 7 | **With God in Red China.** *F. Olin Stockwell. Harper,* $3.00 |
| | | 8 | **Protestantism in America.** *Jerald C. Brauer. Westminster,* $3.50 |
| | | 9 | **Quest for Christian Unity.** *Robert S. Bilheimer. Association Press,* $2.50 |
| | | 10 | **The Recovery of Family Life.** *Elton and Pauline Trueblood. Harper,* $1.50 |

# The Editor's Page

## The Event of the Month

THE SICKENING information that 28,000 U. S. prisoners in North Korean and Chinese hands had been tortured to death and otherwise murdered, has finally been made public. Mr. Lodge, our delegate to the United Nations, has asked the Security Council to condemn this unspeakable atrocity and "provide some plan for its punishment." The request has been passed to the 60 nation Assembly where we fear it may be buried. There can be no doubt that much of this information was possessed by our armistice negotiators many months ago. Its present public disclosure points up the terrible dilemma which our negotiators faced. Should they insist upon a confession of guilt as a condition of an armistice? Or, accepting the fate of these victims as beyond relief, should they waive the moral issue, restore the living prisoners and stop the slaughter of a futile war? Who can blame them for choosing the latter course? Nor can the UN be blamed whether or not it passes Mr. Lodge's resolution. Moral condemnation would mean nothing, and coupled with "a plan for punishment" could only risk the reopening of the war. Meanwhile, thousands of American homes have to bear the haunting knowledge that their sons and brothers were victims of a barbarism reminiscent of Hitler's Dachau and Buchenwald. Mr. Lodge's resolution is in the record. The moral judgment upon this foul deed is in the hands of history.

**28,000 Prisoners 'Unaccounted For'**

## The Book of the Month

AS I REMEMBER, AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY, *by Edgar J. Goodspeed.* Harper, $3.50.

THIS book is the fascinating story of his life told by a distinguished scholar famous for his translation of the New Testament in language critically faithful to the original Greek and understandable by modern readers. At 82 years of age, Dr. Goodspeed's story is a fascinating one. There is the romance of the founding of the University of Chicago in whose beginnings his father and uncle were pioneers with Dr. Harper. He saw the first faculty recruited from the topmost men plucked from the leading universities of the country. He became a member of the faculty as professor and head of the New Testament department. Here his life work was done. The story of his translation of the New Testament which attained a distribution of over a million copies is rightly called by the author a "romance." A graphic account of his finding a precious manuscript of the New Testament in a Paris book shop reads like a fairy tale. The one thing I miss in these memoirs is an account of Dr. Goodspeed's contribution to the historical criticism of the New Testament writings—for example, his theory of the authorship of Ephesians and his controversy with Professor Torrey of Yale over the latter's theory that the Gospels were originally written in Aramaic. He could well enough have omitted much detail in the other stories and made room for his theories as a historical critic.

## A Thought for the Month

THE time is ripe—over-ripe—for a revival of evangelism by American Protestantism. After the great days of D. L. Moody the evangelistic function steadily deteriorated into something more like a racket than a serious and informed proclamation of the Christian faith. The reaction of the churches against the high-pressured claptrap of professionalized revivalism was so violent that virtually the entire function of recruiting church membership was left to the parish minister. In the message of E. Stanley Jones a new note was added to the appeal for personal conversion—the social note of the gospel. His evangelism has been a wholesome and fruitful influence in our church life. Our present need is an evangelism that is more funadmental, more theological, more enlightening as to the essence of Christianity and more vividly applicable to the peculiar mood of our time. The churches are not providing it. We are living too much on the momentum of the faith of our fathers—or our grandfathers. The vacuum left by our default is being filled by psychiatry which offers "peace of mind," by marginal cults which offer spiritual satisfaction in terms of success in temporal affairs, and by the claim of "Mother Church" that in her bosom the problems of life are already solved. Protestantism now needs an informed and profoundly theological evangelism competent to state the gospel in terms relevant to the prevailing mood of our generation. I have noted with interest the course taken by Charles B. Templeton. In the midst of a promising and already successful evangelistic career, he came to feel the inadequacy of his appeal and withdrew into a leading theological seminary where he studied for three years. Returning now to the field under the sponsorship of the National Council, his native zeal enhanced, he rejects the discredited revivalistic "tricks of the trade" and rests his case for soul-winning upon the message itself. Is not this an omen of a new day in evangelism? May his tribe increase!

**A Revival of Evangelism**

Charles Clayton Morrison

## *For the Record—*

HOW will American pastors respond to the Evanston opportunity? No preacher can escape answering this question. The Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches offers ministers on this continent an opportunity which probably will not be repeated until after the year 2000 A.D. In a literal sense, this means it is an opportunity of a lifetime, for hardly again in the active ministry of those who read these lines will a gathering of representative world Christians meet so close to most of our parishes as that which will assemble next August 15-31 in Illinois on Evanston's Northwestern University campus.

The Christian Century Foundation is deeply aware of this challenge. The editors of our sister publication, the *Christian Century*, treated this matter editorially in their issue of October 28. After raising the question as to how this opportunity can best be seized, they said:

> It can, we believe, be seized by any pastor for his parishioners and community, but only at the cost of hard work. Here and there consecreted and informed laymen may step forward to do this work. But in most places it will be up to the pastor. If the pastor is lazy or indifferent or afraid of the issues to arise at Evanston, then whatever comes out of Evanston, carried by whatever media, will crash down on an almost unprepared congregation. But if the pastor perceives the greatness of the opportunity just ahead, and rises to it, then the months between now and next August, and the months immediately after the Evanston meeting, can bring the most vitalizing experience the churches have known in this generation.

The Pulpit will do its share toward realizing the "greatness of the opportunity just ahead." Merrill R. Abbey's sermon in this issue is a start in this direction. Others will follow.

Especially challenging to pastors and local churches will be the six subdivisions of the Evanston theme. These deal with faith and order, evangelism, social problems, international affairs, intergroup relations and the laity. The American office of the World Council of Churches has prepared a valuable series of "Ecumenical Studies" dealing with the above sub-topics which can be secured at nominal cost from 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N. Y. These will be extremely helpful for church study groups.

But The Pulpit will be concerned about how these Evanston subjects can be interpreted effectively from the *pulpits* of North America. Our readers can expect helpful guidance from the next eight issues of this journal toward that objective.

A.M.M.


# The Pulpit

A Journal of Contemporary Preaching

Founded 1929



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The Pulpit is a service publication of the Christian Century Foundation. Signed contributions do not necessarily represent the views of The Pulpit. Contributions should be typewritten, double spaced and addressed to The Pulpit, 407 S. Dearborn St., Chicago 5. Include return postage. Price per copy, 30 cents. Subscription rate, U. S. A., $3.00 a year; Canada, $3.10; foreign, $3.35.

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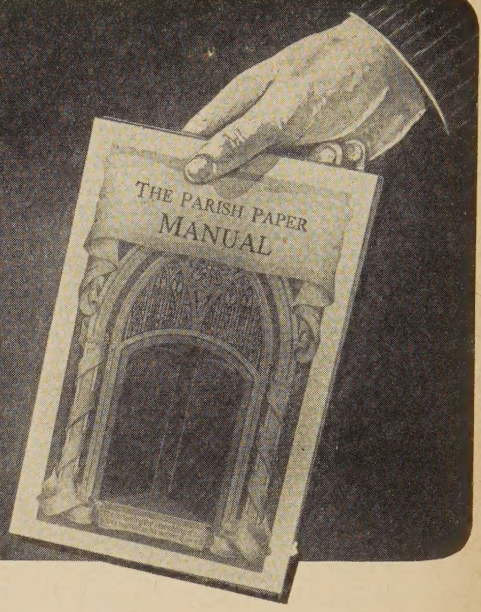


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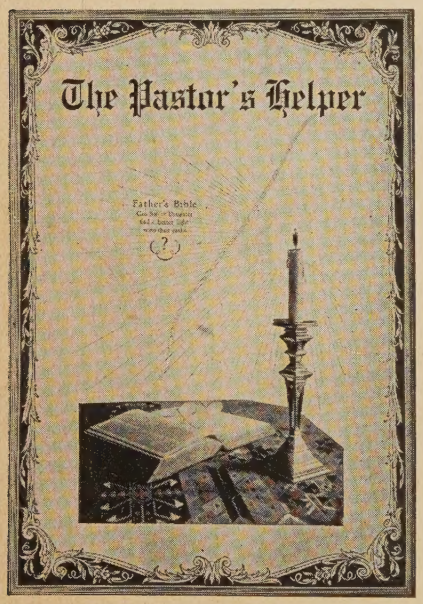


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